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THE NEW

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The Week-end Review

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THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION—The Week-end Review. *Incorporating The New Statesman, The Nation and Athenaeum, Week-end Review.*

BRITISH complacency was badly shaken by the abdication of King Edward VIII. We had been taught that the Monarchy was an impeccable, almost divine, institution, and the discovery that kings are human has been a shock. The press and wireless are now almost frantically reassuring us that no other country could have behaved so well in a crisis, that nothing much has happened and that the Monarchy is stronger than ever. The very words are those used after the General Strike, which upset our theory that there could be no class conflict in Britain, and again after the economic crisis of 1931, and after the budget scandal when we learnt that it was after all possible for a public man in a position of trust to behave improperly. In each case it was left to Mr. Baldwin to explain that no one was to blame, and that we could go on as before with nothing understood and nothing changed. But the shock of King Edward's departure will not be easily forgotten. The moving simplicity of his broadcast will outlive Mr. Baldwin's adroit and masterly speech. After listening to the fulsome phrases about King Edward from Members who were talking very differently in the lobbies, Mr. Buchanan said that he "had never heard so much humbug in his life," and asked, if they really believed what they said, "Why did they unload him?"

The Archbishop and the King

The answer to that question is complicated. All we need say now is that the King did not feel that he could carry out his duties happily or successfully without Mrs. Simpson, and that since he was not allowed to marry her it was better for him to abdicate. No comment on the situation has produced so much disgust as that of the Archbishop in his Sunday broadcast. Judging from the correspondence published in the *Daily Telegraph* and elsewhere, we are not the only journal to receive scores of letters from people who feel that not even an Archbishop has the right to kick a man when he is down, and that there is something peculiarly unpleasant in seeing the chief dignitary of a Church, which, as our correspondents remind us, is itself founded on a divorce, making censorious remarks about a King who has vacated the throne because he desired openly and properly to marry the woman he loved. No Archiepiscopal rebuke was administered to Edward VII. Nor would there have been any difficulty in persuading the Church to solemnise one of these State marriages of convenience which do seem thoroughly immoral to us and our correspondents. Though Mr. Maxton's Republican motion was only supported by five votes, we believe that many members of all Parties agreed with Mr. Attlee's comment about the dangerous and absurd lengths to which adulation of the Monarchy has recently been carried by the press and wireless. And we will add that after the comments of

the *Times* and the Archbishop about the King's entourage, an apology seems to be owing to Sir Stafford Cripps, whose remarks about the danger of Buckingham Palace influences were comparatively mild.

Free State and Commonwealth

As was to be expected, Mr. De Valera has utilised the abdication crisis as an opportunity for bringing the Free State's constitution " into line with the actual facts of the situation." By two Acts passed rapidly by the Dail, the office of Governor-General (in practice long since reduced to a farce) is formally abolished and the King's name deleted from the constitution. On the other hand, though the Free State's diplomatic and consular representatives will henceforth be constitutionally appointed, and all international agreements concluded, by the Executive Council in Dublin, so long as the Free State is " associated with " the other nations of the Commonwealth, and so long as the King " recognised by these nations as the symbol of this co-operation " continues to act on behalf of Commonwealth members in foreign relations, he may so act for the Free State, as and when advised by the Executive Council to do so. Mr. De Valera has in fact revived the famous " Document No. 2," originally propounded by him as an alternative to the Treaty. In a sense he may claim that he has succeeded in turning the Free State into a sort of " non-monarchical " State within a monarchical Empire. Constitutional theories to which the President has always clung with almost mystical fervour are thus satisfied. Practically the essential points are that the Free State's link with the Commonwealth is not broken, and Mr. De Valera has made it finally clear that he does not intend to declare an Irish Republic, *sans phrases*, until he can speak in the name of thirty-two, not twenty-six counties.

A Deal with Italy

Mr. Eden gave at Bradford on Monday one of those well-meaning surveys of British policy that are forgotten as soon as delivered. This usually modest man made the extravagant claim that opinion unanimously supports his policy, which might be true if anyone could grasp it. Two definite passages stood out. In the first he returned in identical words the pledge of military support to France which M. Delbos had just given to Great Britain in the event of unprovoked aggression. That French pledge was somewhat ungratefully ignored by a public preoccupied by the Royal crisis. Again (as M. Delbos had also done), he warned all concerned that this country will not tolerate any infraction of the territorial integrity of Spain. The danger of this remark is that Berlin and Rome may interpret it to mean that London and Paris will tolerate any interventions and grabbings that fall short of an actual cession of territory. In his more general passages Mr. Eden forgot even to mention the League, which had just been meeting in council, with no senior Minister present, to dismiss the Spanish Republic's appeal with meaningless verbiage. He did, however, say that our interest in peace is not " geographically limited," a somewhat negative and non-committal echo of M. Litvinoff's slogan that " peace is indivisible." Turning to Germany he warned her that she must not expect economic help, if all she might gain in this way would be squandered on arms. There recurred the usual amiable protests against " ideological " groups. This is to be understood in the light of the agreement, which, we learn, Downing Street has been fixing up with Italy. Mr. Eden explained in the House of Commons that the British Chargé d'Affaires in Rome had informed the Italian Government that we should regard any alteration in the *status quo* as a matter of the closest concern to Britain and that Count Ciano had reassured us. We understand that Britain has at the same time indirectly recognised the conquest of Abyssinia by reducing the Embassy at Addis Ababa to a Consulate, and promising to agree to the exclusion of Abyssinia from Geneva.

Chang and Chiang

Are the startling events at Sianfu, that " city of western peace " in Shensi, part of a spirited gangster comedy, or are they a major political happening? All that is certain is that Marshal Chiang-Kai-shek, head of the Nanking Government, is held there a prisoner by the troops of Marshal Chang. This " young marshal " comes of a much respected brigand family, which played war-lord in Manchuria till the Japanese drove it out. He is said to be a man of pleasure, unembarrassed by convictions, but when he fled, he carried off part of his capital, which was in the customary mobile form, i.e., it consisted of mercenary troops. These were set to fight the Communists, instead of which (as often happens in China) they fraternised. They now demand that Marshal Chiang shall follow their good example, make friends with the native Communists, conclude an alliance with Soviet Russia, and throw himself into the militant United Front against Japan. But in this subtle land things are rarely what they seem. Translated into our cruder tongue, this may mean merely that Chiang must pay ransom, whether in cash or promotions. But another explanation strikes us as plausible. It is that the Japanese arranged this comedy, in order to have a pretext for saving China from the Chinese. In any event the prestige of Nanking is shattered, which may not be a matter for excessive regret.

The Beef Duties

The Government this week instituted its " long-term " meat policy by imposing import duties on foreign beef and veal. In the New Year these are to be followed up by a Bill conferring a subsidy on the home livestock producers, to an annual amount considerably in excess of the expected produce of the duties. Clearly, it had been the Government's theme that the entire burden of the new subsidy could be placed on the consumers' shoulders by taxing Empire as well as foreign beef, while according a large preference to the Empire product. This, however, would have involved a much higher rate of duty than the Argentine was prepared to accept; and in order to get the new Argentine Trade Agreement the proposal to tax Empire beef had to be dropped—for the Argentine would accept no duty higher than the amount of preference already granted to the Dominions. To this extent the Government's proposals are not quite so restrictive and bad from the consumers' point of view as they might easily have been. But they are bad enough; for it is utterly reactionary and unsound to tax the meat of the poor in order to subsidise the higher quality home product. What is needed to set the meat industry on its feet is not restriction of supply but increased consumption, and that is most likely to be achieved by thoroughly

eorganising distribution, and, of course, still more by giving the consumer a larger purchasing power. But the Government is still in love with restriction; and the debate in Parliament made it only too clear that it was not going nearly far enough to satisfy its back-bench protectionist supporters, who will apparently not be content until we have permanently ruined the Dominions as well as the Argentine and made meat too dear a product for most of the working class.

Safety in Mines

The Mineworkers' Federation has submitted an important memorandum to the Royal Commission on Safety in Coal Mines. The Federation's principal point is that, despite the safety precautions now prescribed by law, the number of accidents has shown in recent years no tendency to decrease, because the additional safety measures have been fully offset by the forces working the other way. The rapidly increasing mechanisation, and especially the use of electricity underground, have added to the dangers of coal-mining; and there has been excessive speeding-up in the attempt to bring down costs in face of the industry's financial difficulties. Very large cost-reductions have in fact been achieved, but largely at the expense of safety. The Federation demands a number of reforms. There should be more State inspectors, and more precautions to prevent their visits being known in advance. The powers of workmen's inspectors should be enlarged, and should include the power to launch prosecutions. Owners and agents, as well as mine managers, should be responsible for breaches of the law. Deputies, who are primarily in charge of safety precautions, should be State officials, and should be relieved of all responsibility for output, and of all duties not connected with their primary function. Their numbers should also be increased. Overtime should be stopped, except when it is necessary to safety; and the minimum age for mine-work should be raised to sixteen. Despite the dangers involved in mechanisation, the Federation regards its further growth as unavoidable: it demands, however, that the parallel necessity of more stringent safety provisions shall be recognised. Recent mine accidents undoubtedly give strong support to its case.

The People's Front

At a meeting held in Friends' House on Monday, the movement for a People's Front in Great Britain received its send-off. Among the speakers were a Liberal M.P., Mr. Acland, a Conservative M.P., Mr. Boothby, two Labour Party speakers, and a Communist, Mr. Strachey, who made the point that he alone was able to speak for his party. No Labour M.P. spoke; but Mr. Dobbie, who was prevented at the last moment from coming, sent his good wishes. Canon Guy Rogers was in the chair. When the meeting was announced, it was not easy to understand what Mr. Boothby, as a supporter of the National Government, was doing at it; for surely a People's Front can have no other object than to pull the Government down, and put a "Left" Government in its place. By the end of the meeting, Mr. Boothby seems to have realised his error; for he left the platform as soon as one of the speakers—Mr. Cole—definitely proclaimed this as the purpose of the movement. Plainly enough, all the speakers except Mr. Boothby found it easy enough to agree on a simple common programme upon which a Left Government could be kept busy for at least five years. The difficulty is not one of programme: it is that the leaders of the Labour Party won't play. Unless they will, clearly the movement cannot advance beyond the propagandist stage; but, to judge from Monday's meeting, there is plenty of support for the idea from Labour people as well as Liberals and unattached "progressives."

Ossietsky

Though pronounced a free man by the German authorities, Herr von Ossietsky was not present at the ceremony at Oslo conferring on him the Nobel Peace Prize. His absence does not seem to have been due to the breakdown of his health after three years in a concentration camp. Nor is it at all clear what is to be done with the money awarded to him. Nazi propaganda in some Swedish papers has suggested that the money should be given "in trust" to the German Government! In the circumstances, we are glad to hear that two English doctors are starting for Germany to convey to Ossietsky the good wishes of his numerous admirers in this country, to discuss with him what he himself wishes to do with his money and to arrange, if necessary, for him to find refuge in a sanatorium as a free man.

The Lambert Case

The report of the Special Board of Inquiry into the relations between Mr. Lambert and the B.B.C. is a perfect example of the fruits of a reluctant investigation by the British ruling class into any "regrettable incident." Temperate censure is distributed with even-handed justice to all concerned. Mr. Lambert, in a memorandum addressed by him on November 12th to Sir John Reith, used improper language, and his suspicions that he was the victim of "persecution" were groundless. Mr. Gladstone Murray is blamed—notwithstanding the absence of defending testimony from him—for his handling of the slander incident. The memorandum sent to Mr. Lambert by Sir Stephen Tallents on the authority of the Director-General and the Governors on March 6th, warning him that if he went on with his action against Sir Cecil Levita he might prejudice his position with the B.B.C. was ill-advised, and its wording "singularly inept." On the other hand, Mr. Lambert's feeling that he was being unfairly used was "not unreasonable" in the light of the circumstances as he knew them at the time; the supposed friendship between Sir Cecil Levita and Mr. Norman (the B.B.C. chairman) played no part in the affair; the B.B.C. throughout acted with "honesty," did not intend to dismiss Mr. Lambert, or exercise improper economic pressure on him, and merely failed to realise the "substantial nature of Mr. Lambert's grievance." The Board express the earnest hope that the incident may be closed by the formal withdrawal of the variant peccant memoranda. So it may be. But the Board's application of a mixture of white-wash and denigration will scarcely dispel the impression that the hierarchy in control of the B.B.C. are signally deficient in a sense of human values and humour alike, and that a misguided attempt has been made to run Broadcasting House on semi-military lines.

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MEDIATION?

THE Franco-British proposals for mediation in Spain appeal so strongly to our hopes that no one can wish to belittle their chances. Reason pleads loudly for them, while the whole trend of events warns us against illusions. The German answer suggests a readiness to keep the conversations going interminably, while Italy avoids committing herself and Portugal is flatly negative. The plan can succeed only if all the backers of both sides in the Civil War are willing to stop the despatch both of arms and men. How much more Italy plans to do by the despatch of troops is uncertain, but Germany has plunged till her prestige is deeply involved. Why should Hitler desist, if he meets only with moral disapproval from Paris, London and Geneva? He is playing for high stakes. If Franco wins, solely or mainly through German support, Hitler gains an ally who must remain dependent on him. Spain becomes a pawn in moves devised to encircle France. We have never believed that she will actually cede territory, but in these conditions the Germans, and to a less degree the Italians, could count on the use of her ports, islands and aerodromes for their strategical purposes in the Atlantic, the Straits and the Mediterranean. That is a threat not only to British sea routes but also to the ability of France to draw on her African manpower. Mr. Eden's warning about the integrity of Spanish territory was useful, but short of cession there are many ways in which Spanish soil can be utilised. With this goes the likelihood that a Fascist Spain would become in the economic sense a German colony; that Germans would develop her backward industries, and exploit the minerals, copper and iron-ore, which Hitler's war-machine chiefly lacks. Already in payment of Franco's debt all the iron-ore of Spanish Morocco is going to Germany. Finally, if by her audacity Germany can prove her ability to dominate Spain, while she demonstrates the incurable weakness of the Western Powers, her prestige will overshadow Europe, and in the Balkans, the Danube Valley and on the Baltic shores the little States will rally to the victors. These are high stakes: to win them it is intelligible that a daring player should face considerable risks.

What are the military odds in Spain to-day? First it seems likely that, thanks to the growing steadiness of the Republican forces, or to Franco's lack of man-power, a Fascist victory cannot be assured by the means now at the rebels' disposal. The Republican militia, very slowly, is becoming a disciplined force. Franco's Moors are said to be weakened by heavy casualties and the climate. His few Spanish volunteers are fit only for police work behind the fighting front. He now relies chiefly on German shock-troops, which may number, if we accept the estimate of the *Times*, from 10,000 to 14,000 men. The International Brigade, which consists of about ten thousand genuine volunteers, serving for negligible pay, among whom the French predominate, and after them the German and Italian exiles and the Poles, acts as a shock formation that has given confidence to the less-experienced Spaniards. The facts about Russian help can be reached only through a haze of legend and propaganda. Actually Russia was so little concerned with Spain that she had there no ambassador and no consul till the late summer of this year. The Republic in its early liberal phase decided to recognise her, and ambassadors should have been exchanged. But Lunacharsky, whom Moscow appointed, fell ill and eventually died. Then came the period of reaction, and the proposal to exchange ambassadors lapsed, until the People's Front won the elections in February. M. Rosenberg reached Madrid towards the end of August, but apart from generous gifts of food, it was not till October that armed help arrived. The first Russian 'planes reached Madrid only on November 7th. After careful inquiry in several informed quarters we conclude that there are no mass formations of Russian troops in Spain, and no infantry; nor are there any Russians in the Brigade, though its commander, General Kleber, a Canadian citizen, served in the Red Army. There are Russian specialists, airmen, engineers and tank experts to the number of a few hundred. Their 'planes, however, have proved to be much more than a match for the German. While it is true that Russia in these ways has rendered great services to the Republic, she has plunged less heavily than Hitler, and could call a halt (as she has proposed to do) without fatal loss of prestige. She is not playing for material stakes, and is concerned chiefly to arrest the Fascist flood in Europe and to retain the goodwill of its working-class.

If the Western Powers take no decided step, the two chief backers may be driven to plunge further. Hitler may double the number of his troops; Russia in her turn may draw on the mass formations that she could command with ease. It would be a rehearsal of the often predicted war—indeed, in the air it is that already. Every week that is wasted in talk brings this dreaded possibility nearer. The Germans assume that whether from timidity or from divided sympathies the British Government never will act. They reckon that the French, partly out of regard for Downing Street and partly because of divided sympathies in the middle class and the services, are also immobilised. If in these calculations they judge correctly, the fatal drift will go on till catastrophe is upon us.

What would suffice to arrest it? The costly and cumbersome plan for stationing neutral inspectors in Spanish ports and along the frontiers could work, after long delay, only if there were a general will to respect it. Without that will it could only illuminate the chaos. For suppose that Germany were still to send a ship laden with munitions or "totalitarian volunteers." When it reached Cadiz, would its men be content to sail home again merely because some harmless Norwegian or Belgian gentleman met them on the quay, and reminded them that a Neutrality Committee was sitting in London? The will to observe neutrality will manifest itself when there is the will to enforce it. We do not recede from our original position that this whole conception of "neutrality" is a judicial monstrosity: the Madrid Government has at law the right to import arms, which Franco cannot claim. We are dealing, however, with a world in which even this falsified conception of law can count only on lax guardians. Until they are ready to enforce it, such as it is, we see no reason why Hitler should alter his course. If, on the other hand, the British and French Governments were, in plain words, to announce that they will use their warships on the Spanish coasts to back the neutral inspectors and stop the landing

of troops and arms, a new situation would confront us. Flagrant breaches of the agreement would cease, though smuggling on a small scale might continue, especially by aerial routes, for over the air there is not yet even a verbal agreement for control. This proposal is not an easy one to frame, since for its effective enforcement it might imply a readiness to act within territorial waters which would make yet another breach in the crumbling fabric of law. It would be wiser perhaps to state it in more general terms: some international police, presumably naval, must be placed at the disposal of the inspectors. A frank and official warning by Great Britain and France to Berlin and Rome that they will not confine themselves to verbal protests if these flagrant breaches of the agreement continue, would probably suffice to bring them to an end. To us it seems that an effort should be made by the whole Opposition, acting with the humaner men on the Conservative back-benches, to rally, by argued statements and mass meetings, a volume of opinion that will drive a hesitating Government to prove in one of these ways that it has the will to act. At present, on the map of Europe there is a vacuum where London used to be.

This is the first indispensable step. The rest is much more dubious. However anxious we may be to end the slaughter promptly, there are long-range considerations to be weighed. To mediate and propose an armistice to-day means leaving in occupation of half Spain a Dictator whose right is nothing but the might of his imported troops. It demands an heroic act of faith to believe that a referendum could be arranged by which the population could vote freely. Neither side will admit stalemate, and the Republic stands, naturally and rightly, on its claim to be the lawful Government of all Spain. The election of last February, conducted by a Ministry of the Right, was already a referendum. But even if these objections are waived, the Saar precedent is remote enough from this case. Spain has many times the extent of the Saar district and would require a formidable international army of occupation. How, after mutual massacre on the scale of recent months can men be induced to debate amicably and vote freely? If Franco won a bare majority, does democratic logic then require that the Republicans shall lay down their arms and bare their breasts to his firing squads? Reason may plead for this solution, but it is unimaginably difficult.

The first preliminary steps are as yet enough for us. One of them is negative. A disturbing hint was dropped by Lord Plymouth at the Neutrality Committee that the British Government may take unilateral measures to stop volunteering from this country. To check these few hundred volunteers, while Hitler is allowed to reinforce his ten thousand, would be a scandalous act of partisanship. Unilateral action from this side has again and again weighted the scales against the Republic. The Opposition would doubtless resist, but the risk is that this one-sided step (whose significance from a legal standpoint is discussed on a later page) may be taken after Parliament has risen. The other imperative first step is positive. In the appropriate diplomatic form this country and France must make it clear that they will not tolerate further breaches of neutrality and are prepared to back by force a police blockade of Spain. To that end the will must be generated in this country to withstand the Fascist flood by acts.

A LONDON DIARY

"CRITIC" last week wrote about the psychology of the House of Commons during the Royal Marriage crisis and the change which came over the House during the week-end. The communal psychology of the country, the ebb and flow of popular thought and emotion through the ten days that shook a throne, are a fascinating study. One can only record impressions or ask questions. The essence of what we call public opinion is its perpetual motion, and the motion is kaleidoscopic; if you stop a kaleidoscope in order to examine it carefully, it ceases to be kaleidoscopic. You find the same difficulty in examining public opinion. It differs, too, enormously from place to place and from class to class. A man who had to travel on business told me that he went at the height of the excitement to Bristol and to Coventry. In both places he talked with a large number of people. In Bristol practically every one was on the side of the King; in Coventry practically every one was against him.

* * *

My own impression is that in London, at any rate, when the newspapers all simultaneously exploded into news of Mrs. Simpson on the Thursday morning, the first reaction among the public was simply pleasurable excitement. It was partly sheer amusement, partly the universal love of gossip, and partly an odd feeling of release from silence. As one walked down Southampton Row there was almost a holiday feeling in the air; one talked and laughed with complete strangers; the rigid barriers which divide us townspeople from one another were temporarily lowered. Next day there was already a change noticeable. The excitement remained to a large extent, but the mere pleasure and amusement were giving way to the formation of opinion, the crystallisation of arguments. What that "public opinion" was and how it ebbed and flowed on the Friday, Saturday and Sunday in London and the Home Counties, it is very difficult to say. The upper and middle bourgeoisie was, I think, already against the King. For instance, no finer sample of the bourgeois mind can be found than in one of those Kensington hotels which contain a large number of permanent residents and a floating population of visitors. In one of these the males were from the first solidly against the King; the solidity of the females was slightly softened by sentimentality. Lower down in the social scale there was much greater divergence of opinion, usually either temperamental or personal. A village publican whom I know was strongly in favour of the King being allowed to marry whom he wished; his wife was so much of the opposite opinion that, when it was all over, she refused to listen to the King's broadcast, because she knew it would make her pity him, and he didn't deserve it.

* * *

The process of the formation of public opinion over the week-end and throughout the following few days was extraordinarily interesting. I think that in the mass of people below the middle middle-class there was an enormous amount of sympathy for the King. But it was always sympathy strongly tinged with doubt. Those who were against him—and there were many in every class—were vehemently against him and had no doubts. "He ought to be ashamed of himself—him a King," said the girl in the tobacconist shop to me. And I do not think it is true, as some people say, that the main motive of opposition to the marriage was among the common people puritanism. Except in the case of the village publican's wife and of a London taxi-driver, I never came across a trace of puritanism. The reason for the opposition and also for the hesitation of many who were half-inclined to "stand by" the King in the early days was something much deeper and to themselves more intangible. It was a reaction to the royal myth which had been created in the public mind during the last reign. There is no doubt that the propaganda and publicity with regard to the Royal Family,

to which we have been subjected for many years, partly for political or "social" purposes, were in many respects extremely skilful, but they had their dangers. They put the King and Queen, the Princes and Princesses, high above criticism, the objects solely of adoration, adulation and sentimentality. The King became a god—as he had been so often in the good old days—the Queen a housemaid's dream. Nothing is more dangerous than tampering with the people's gods or disturbing the housemaid's dream. The ceremonial killing of the king was the corollary of his divinity in ancient times, and when Figaro exploded the housemaid's dream of the eighteenth century, he brought on the French Revolution. Something of the same kind happened last week in London. The number of people who thought anything of the fact that Mrs. Simpson had two husbands still living was negligible, but thousands of people were "against the King," and thousands who were inclined to "stand by" the King hesitated, because the myth had crumbled, the dream exploded, because they felt instinctively that the descent from Queen Mary to Mrs. Simpson was too steep. You can make a god out of a Julius Caesar, or still better out of an Augustus, but you can do nothing in that line with Antony and Cleopatra.

* * *

The change which "Critic" remarked as taking place over the week-end in the House of Commons also began in the general public. The violent propaganda of the popular press and of the Fascists missed fire; instead of rousing passion it seemed to cause uneasiness. It is indeed a standing marvel that those "vocal voices, most vociferous" of Lords Beaverbrook and Rothermere, which "out-vociferize ev'n sound itself," again and again appear to have little or no effect upon public opinion. At any rate, by Tuesday morning it was clear that there was no "King's Party" either in the House or in the country. Everyone was prepared to see the King go, some with relief, others with regret. I walked down Whitehall on Thursday afternoon just before Mr. Baldwin made his statement. The crowd, silent and rather depressed, was large enough to stop the traffic. We all, I think, expected abdication. Outside the Horse Guards I met a friend, the descendant of one of the noble Whigs of William of Orange. She thought that the King must go, but was miserable about it, feeling it somehow to be a slur on the history of England. We talked of kings and Shakespeare, and she pointed to a window in a house opposite the Horse Guards, and she told me how her mother had told her that it was through that window that Charles I had stepped on his way to the block. Farther down Whitehall we met another friend, another descendant of famous Whigs, of Macaulay and Holland House and the nineteenth-century Liberals. He too thought that the King should go, and he too was miserable about it. I felt as though I were walking with the whole of English history down Whitehall to make English history. The crowd closed round us, depressed, resigned, having itself unwillingly delivered its judgment—against the King. As nothing happened, we at last disentangled ourselves and moved away, and seeing a solitary taxi got into it to go home. As we did so there appeared from nowhere a man with evening papers and a placard: The King Abdicates. There we read it in the stop press, just as seventeen years ago I had read in the stop press of the *Star*: "The Kaiser has abdicated." That is the way, I suppose, all modern history is recorded—in the stop press of evening papers. We sat in Whitehall and discussed it with the taxi-driver, who delivered judgment regretfully, but with emphasis and conviction: "It wouldn't have done," he said; "it wouldn't have done." The crowd in Whitehall obviously agreed with him.

* * *

The other day I had the pleasure of entertaining two distinguished foreigners from China. After they had asked and I had answered the usual questions about the British Constitution, Rudyard Kipling's poetry, and the function of the Poet-Laureate, I asked them for their impressions of London. The politeness which is so marked in their race led them to praise our dogs, our police, and the remarkable qualities which, during the past few days, have raised us even higher than usual in our own esteem. Then there was a pause and the lady murmured, "But your gardens . . ." Naturally I expected that she was about to launch out on a further and final panegyric. But alas—she had taken rooms in a certain street because the advertisement spoke of a garden. "A garden!" she exclaimed. "But there were no tortoises and no goldfish!" How could a Bloomsbury boarding house claim to have a garden when these were absent? In order to rehabilitate my country I assured her that all gardens, save those in Bloomsbury, keep large supplies of both. In my own garden, I assured her, she would see the descendants of the very carp to whom Marie Antoinette on her way to the scaffold tossed a few handfuls of cake. As for tortoises—but here, unfortunately, truth compelled me to falter. Some time ago I bought a pair of water tortoises which, I was assured, would stand an English winter out of doors. All through the summer they disported themselves on the rocks in a pond. As winter drew on and the nights were frosty, the couple displayed a statuesque intensity which earned them the name of Tristan and Isolde, and often caused visitors to compare the fidelity of tortoises with that of men. Their prolonged rapture at last roused suspicion, and it was discovered, by touching them with a stick, that in fact both were frozen to death. If then we are to deserve the praise of the Chinese, we should remember that tortoises in order to survive the winter must be kept warm, preferably in a greenhouse, near a basin of water. My present pair show less intensity, but are alive; instead of singing the Liebestod they eat earthworms.

* * *

Another result of the Chinese visit was that I spent a few hours and a few coppers last week in exploring London. Naturally, since they only had one fortnight in England, and were busily engaged in collecting material for a book on anthropology, they had visited the British Museum, the Tate Gallery, the Tower of London, the Roman Baths in the Strand, Lambeth Palace, and an obscure museum near South Kensington where stones are kept. Reminded of my own omissions, I began with the Guildhall. I had not been there since an uncle home from India conceived it his duty to give me a treat. I am glad to be able to state that the Guildhall has scarcely changed in the interval. Not many people, I suspect, have visited the picture galleries. No one, that afternoon, save myself and an official, was looking at the vast shiny pictures of defunct Lord Mayors entertaining defunct Kings and Queens at enormous banquets. But in the great Banqueting Hall itself all was animation. Whether the red carpet is showing signs of wear, or whether the last Lord Mayor's banquet was unusually strenuous, it is a fact that the floor of the Guildhall was in possession of a large army of land crabs, sewing women, stitching indefatigably under the grin of Gog and Magog and the monument to Lord Mayor Beckford. The fine collection of watches was almost deserted. Down in the basement silence reigned, and the old boars' heads, which had stood over Elizabethan taverns, had no company but spearheads, some Roman pottery, myself, and a typist. She was gazing with admiration at a tray of necklaces, once the property of Stuart ladies, lately dug up under the foundations of Wakefield House and now displayed in a glass case. "Why don't they give them to the young Princesses?" she asked, turning to me. But the daily papers urge us to resume drudgery and renounce romance. Were it otherwise, I should have liked to draw attention to Mrs. Wrightson's cook's daughter. It is a fact (see *Dear Miss Heber*, page 244), and a significant fact, that this lady, had she accepted either of the two proposals of the Duke of Clarence, might have been Queen of England and Victoria's aunt. But she was obdurate. She preferred—who shall say unwisely?—to remain for ever the daughter of Mrs. Wrightson's cook.

LEONARD WOOLF

THIS ENGLAND

Our prize of 5/- for the contribution at the head of the column goes this week to "Xerxes."

All cuttings should be addressed to "This England," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1.

It is, I think, because he [Mr. Baldwin] is so completely an Englishman, because he has to the highest degree the Englishman's queer, unreasonable, instinctive knowledge of the human heart, that makes him supreme in such a crisis as this. There is no coincidence in the fact that Mr. Baldwin comes from Worcestershire, and Shakespeare from Warwickshire, counties that are the very core of England.—A. G. Macdonnell in the *Bystander*.

The King may abdicate but with the love for Dixon's jams and pickles the family stick together like the Empire.—Advt. in *Bradford Telegraph and Argus*.

Primed with instructions from Russia—to get rid of the King—Mr. Baldwin has had a busy week—backwards and forwards—backwards and forwards—several times a day to hold a pistol to the head of the King, crying, "Do my will—or—abdicate."—Leader in *Saturday Review*.

Let there be no sham sentiment neither.—Mr. J. L. Garvin in the *Observer*.

People who speak lightly about the restrictions imposed upon royalty in private life do not always realise the extent to which those restrictions have to be carried, even among very young people . . . . .

On such occasions as nursery parties at Glamis, the children may all forget a little, when they are really in the thick of the afternoon's fun, the ceremonial that surrounds their hostesses. But when the party goes in to tea or moves from one room to another, it has to be brought quickly to mind again. A little procession makes itself up in strict order of precedence.—*Evening Standard*.

Another example of Foreign Office flabbiness is in the Spanish affair. From the beginning I have argued that our proper game was to be strictly neutral and supply both sides, with a natural bias towards the Nationalist forces.—Mr. C. G. Grey in the *Aeroplane*.

. . . a white Pinot wine from Puligny-Montrachet, in the Côte d'Or and of the 1934 vintage. It smells young and there is something quite appealing, even if unsatisfying, in the supple yet firm texture of its adolescent body.—*Wine and Food*.

In these evil days of strife, bloodshed and hate, would it not be almost a blessing if Heaven sent some dire comet or other form of celestial portent to terrify the nations out of their sins?

How soon they would forget air raids and dictators, Bolshevism and armaments, did some monstrous horror suddenly blaze forth in the sky, and, ever drawing nearer, threaten instantaneous death and destruction!

Such a dread menace, though finally averted, would, I think, effectually regenerate mankind and accomplish in less than a week what the Churches have failed to do for more than twelve centuries. —Letter in *Star*.

Smith Knows What he is Talking About is next Monday's article: First of three on the English language—the gift that distinguishes us from foreigners and animals.—*Daily Express*.

THINGS SEEN IN SPAIN

MADRID

FAMILY hatreds are proverbially the fiercest—the furious jealousy roused by the elder brother to whom has fallen the richer inheritance, the loathing a girl feels for the unpardonable prettiness of her younger sister. Greater riches, greater beauty—when they belong to strangers—do not excite the same ferocity. In Spain now, one notices this. On the Frente Popular side you prefer your parish priest to the one in the next village—prefer him as a person to kill. And similarly, when aviators on the Government side are captured by the Nationalist troops, it is the Spanish pilots, not the foreigners, who are tortured with the greatest savagery. It was a Spanish pilot whose body, hacked into pieces, was thrown down in a box on to the city from a rebel aeroplane the day I left Madrid.

In this war there is chivalry too, which is not incompatible with the worst cruelty. On one of the last days of the siege of the Alcazar, where the Nationalist cadets were besieged, a truce was arranged so that a bishop from Madrid could give his blessing to the dying men in the vaults of the fortress. His duty discharged, the bishop brought together some insurgent officers and some leaders of the Government militia. He disposed the two parties to right and to left of him, and began preaching peace and good will. His homily was interrupted by the loudspeaker of the Alcazar, tuned in to Seville, which started playing dance music. At once the two parties began hurling insults at each other over the bishop's head, and next they began to vaunt the doctrines for which they were fighting.

A Nationalist found an unexpected argument:

"Our faith is nobler than yours, for we still continue to fight after more than ten days without cigarettes."

This boast caused a sensation among the Communists, who at once threw to the Fascists all the cigarettes in their pockets. They even sent for further supplies to a tobacconist round the corner. How could they leave to the enemy the advantage of privations which made them heroes?

"More than that," the rebel continued, "we have been fighting for a fortnight without being able to shave. Just look at our beards!"

Again an argument which caused consternation. And a militia officer shouted to an urchin: "Pedro, run off to my wife and get three packets of Gillette blades. Tell her I sent you, and look sharp."

When the boy returned, the Communists threw the razor-blades to their enemies; and these scrambled on the ground to pick the packets up, and losing all restraint, began fighting among themselves. The bishop resumed his entreaties:

"My children, you divided the cigarettes like good Christians. So what makes you fight for Gillette blades?" No one listened. The truce ended, and the fighting began once more round the Alcazar.

* * *

Artillery, aeroplanes, tanks, all sorts of modern weapons are being used by the foreign volunteers—German and Italian, on the rebel side, French and above all Russian for the Government. And here in contrast to the primitive, bloodthirsty and childish character of the really Spanish civil war, there is, for the first time for eighteen years, fighting in which one can observe and compare modern instruments of war in their newest patterns. As an aviator, let me describe a fight between my friends of the Espanha Government squadron and an Italian squadron.

11.10 a.m. Three chasers, Dary, Guidez (both French) and Doherty (English), on Dewoitines, against eight Fiats, above Toledo. First come twenty minutes of ballet. Each Dewoitine draws two or three enemy machines into the area of its dance. At 11.30 Guidez begins a duel four thousand metres up against an enemy whom he has isolated. He dives and attacks from below. The Fiat is shot down. At the same moment Dary also engages. The Italian delivers a spray of fire from the side, which makes a pattering noise like a hail of pebbles falling on a saucepan. Eighteen holes just behind the Dewoitine's cockpit. The Italian pilot was four inches out—that is one-thousandth of a second. And the mistake costs him his life. Dary brings him down with thirty bullets from his machine-gun.

At 12.10 the Fiats make off, and the three Espanha pilots land after an hour of fighting at over 250 miles an hour, zoomings and vertical dives, between one and four thousand metres up. They are dead beat, and don't say a word.

This was one of the daily battles which modern aircraft

have been fighting for the last five months in Spain. Here is the general impression left on me by what I saw: in spite of an inferiority in numbers, a squadron of French volunteers could stand up to the Germans and Italians, because the French chasers are better machines. The German pilots fight with very great courage, but their Italian colleagues retire very readily from the field, even when more numerous than the enemy. The Russian machines, which have just made their entry in the Spanish war, seem the best of all. Experience of these facts is certainly affecting those Powers which are preparing for a European war.

All those who have been witnesses of the Spanish fighting are struck with horror and astonishment. And I must beg forgiveness, if after seeing Madrid devastated I still also have comic memories of this monstrous war. My last Spanish impression was of a militia man who stopped my car just short of the frontier. This extempore soldier was armed with a bullfighter's sword, which he brandished in front of our Ford. He had come out of a sentry-box at the side of the road. And this sentry-box had been torn from a church. It was an elaborately carved confessional.

J. M. CONTY

BARCELONA

COMING back to Spain, with the papers full of the threatened bombardment of Barcelona, the rain falling all day, the passengers thinning out after Perpignan, one had a certain apprehension. Everything about the country had assumed a wartime aspect. "Militians! Not a word to your brother, not a word to your sweetheart about your positions!" read one notice, and the familiar "*les oreilles ennemies vous écoutent*" had made its appearance. Other slogans warned people against wasting time in the café or the brothel. "Are you doing your bit?" one felt, was near at hand. The vast influx of refugees from Madrid had made an appreciable dent in the food supply. Sunday was a day of impressive gloom marked by the funeral of Durruti.

Why did half a million people turn out in the rain on this occasion, marching in silence twenty-five abreast, climbing up trees, crowding the windows to see this man's coffin carried on its six-hour journey by the pall-bearers? Why did the car bringing his body from Madrid have to speed through the villages in the small hours to avoid the lorry loads of waiting flowers which there would be no time to fetch? It seemed that if one could get the answer, penetrating beneath the verbose eulogies, one would understand something of the Spanish revolution.

Durruti was born in 1896 in Leon. He came to Barcelona in his teens, and was already a metal-worker and a militant anarchist. There he met his two life-long friends, Ascaso and García Oliver. Ascaso had been a baker and a café waiter in Zaragoza. Both had been in sufficient strikes and other activities to have had to leave Spain by 1917. They went to the Argentine where they started an anarchist organisation, and were accused of holding up a bank. They wandered through Chile, Peru, Brazil, and found their way to Paris, where Durruti went back to his steel-work after having had to live in the woods of the Dordogne on mushrooms. In Paris, after the Argentine had made an unsuccessful attempt to extradite them and enforce the death sentence, they founded a bookshop called the Librairie Internationale, and, with García Oliver, an anti-monarchist newspaper which was smuggled into Spain. They were accused of an attempt on Alfonso and imprisoned in the Conciergerie (Durruti had Marie Antoinette's cell). They were released and went to Belgium, whence they were expelled into Germany and back again, at one moment having to camp out on the international bridge. Finally they returned to Spain where they were imprisoned, released, and imprisoned again for their activities in the general strike in Saragossa. Their friends broke into the Archives and destroyed the dossier of the case.

When the 6th of October revolution collapsed in Barcelona they were imprisoned for nearly a year in Valencia. When the Fascists, who had left their garrisons in the small hours of July 19th, were defeated in the Plaza de Cataluña, the anarchists, led by Durruti and Ascaso, went down the Ramblas to the Plaza de Colon. On the top platform of the column, sheltered by Columbus himself, two machine gunners were firing on the crowd, and the whole of one side of the square was occupied by the barracks of the Atarazanas. While they were storming these Ascaso was shot through the heart. He was small, consumptive, with a pale, intelligent face and large dark eyes.

To-day there is a monument on the site where he fell, a few yards from the barred windows and gaping walls of the shattered caserne. Durruti was one of the first to realise the importance of attacking, and led a column up to Aragon. He proved a natural organiser and his column, on the front of Bujaroloz, became famous as the perfect example of "organised indiscipline," that is to say, of a kind of "honour system" by which the anarchists, who detest militarism and disapprove of all orders and words of command, were able to establish a sort of natural obedience to his wishes. He lived the same life as his men, accessible to all, going barefoot till all had received boots, and only differentiated from them by the possession of a pair of field-glasses. He was put in command of the Catalan reinforcements sent to Madrid and was killed on his way back by car from the front by a bullet in the spine, fired from behind, from the upper window of a deserted villa. His last words were "*se me para el corazon*," though he had previously said that he could never regret dying now, for he had lived, in the last three months, through what had been the dream of every revolutionary for centuries. He was a rugged, lion-like man, possessed of natural intelligence and reckless courage, capable of complete devotion to his ideals of "*madre anarquia*" and to the people who shared them, and an equally untiring energy in using direct action against the capitalists who didn't. His gift of leadership made him an extreme danger to the Fascists (who had already shot his mother) and his death made him a revolutionary martyr, a symbol to all the parties of the Left of the sacrifices they would have to make and the privations they would have to undergo. His mammoth funeral ("no king could have a better," said an anarchist to me) was not only a tribute to him but an act of defiance to the enemy.

A week later I went to see the coffin moved from a vault to its ultimate grave. The cemetery of Barcelona is one of the most beautiful in the world. It lies on the western slope of the Montjuich, and to get there one has to skirt the gloomy fortress whose cells were so often full of Durruti's comrades and in whose trenches they were shot. The cemetery is laid out in rocky terraces planted with groves of cypress, pepper, and eucalyptus. On the extreme edge, overlooking the *huerta* and the sea, they had made a grave for Durruti and another for Ascaso, beside a third, that of the unfortunate Ferrer y Guardia, the old gentleman who was shot in 1909 for attempting to introduce secular education into Catalonia. This time it was a very small crowd; the sextons were incompetent at getting the huge coffin into the grave; they talked and asked advice, the others stood about smoking or watching the winter sunset. When it was finally in, a soldier put the anarchist flag over it and said, "We, the German soldiers serving in your column, will not forget you. Salud! Kamerad."

* * *

"Yes. I like New York best—ever been to Rockaway Beach? That's where I like in summer, my girl and I go out there with a bottle of whisky or we go to the movies, Ginger Rogers, Laurel and Hardy. Look at the orange groves—we must be getting into Castellon. I wish this full moon would be over. Marlene Dietrich in *Desire*—there was a good film now. They turn all the lights out in the train here and we must go on in the dark. They'll give us candles in the restaurant car. Well, I dunno. I dunno. Of course, I think we're right, but maybe you ought to go in on the other side and see what they're thinking. I only know I got seven bullets in this

gun and the last one's for myself. Jus' now the planes come two or three times a week to Cartagena, where I live is about 5 kilometres out when I'm not on the ship. I hear them come over in the night. Brrrr. Zoooom! Then they drop them. There's nothing you can do but stay in bed. Then if they get you, well, bad luck! The only safe place is in a field. You see, these bombs don't explode when they strike; they have a time-fuse that rotates in the end, and when they fall in a field the earth stops it rotating. That's why they go through eight stories of a house and don't explode till they get to the bottom, and the refugios are not much good. We have no metro in Valencia or Cartagena. If you go out you get hit by glass or by anti-aircraft bullets or by a Fascist from a window. That's why I carry this. You see, the anti-aircraft is not much good. They can light up all over Cartagena with searchlights and when the planes are in the lights they can fire, but when the planes fly high above the lights it is no good. And when they fly very low they lose their heads and it is no good either. And often they send over one plane with lights and the gunners all fire at that while the bombers are somewhere else. I dunno. They do terrible things. We all do terrible things. Since we had the prison ship nobody eats fish any more in Cartagena."

The candles gutter in the restaurant car. The sailor looks out of the window at the laden orange trees, the sea breaking on nameless coves in the moonlight. He has a small, brittle face and a sensual mouth, like a lemur. All the other tables are taken by anarchist militia on their way from the front at Barbastro to Madrid; they have black and red scarves tied round their heads, and their appearance, by candlelight, is terrifying. They give one cigars which they light from lengths of dynamite fuse. When the ticket collector appears, the first one asked cries, "I am a Valencian going to Valencia. That is my ticket," and the others applaud him. Valencia at night is perturbing. Up till ten o'clock lights are allowed. The street lights are painted dark blue and the white houses under them look like something on the moon. At ten o'clock they are all turned out, the town is in darkness, outside many houses and windows are piles of sandbags. By day it rains. The town is noisy and political; being the seat of the Government one sees and hears much more of the official democratic point of view and less of the revolutionary one than in Barcelona. This point of view is naturally more pessimistic, for while the workers are fighting to create a new world for themselves the liberal bourgeoisie whom the original Azaña Government represented are fighting only to preserve something of what they had before. Consequently they are more able to see the extent of the destruction which the civil war has brought, the ruined towns, the scattered harvests, the decimated population, the acts of violence, the appalling spectacle of a brave race splitting itself into two and by its very bravery (as with the miners outside and the rebels inside Oviedo) prolonging the agony of the conflict within. There is no defeatism—it is the difference between August, 1914, and January, 1915, that is all. In the evening, sitting with the sailor and his doctor friend in a music-hall, one is conscious of the gravity of the civil war for those to whom it is not the dawning of a new day, but the eclipse of an old one. They sit on chairs in a box with their backs to the stage, across which passes, from time to time, an enormous undressed woman singing the same words to the same tune. The doctor is talking of his wife and children whom he has not heard of since July, when they were holidaying in the mountains in what became rebel territory. "Is there any organisation in England for finding out if such people are alive?" The sailor says good-bye. "We are going on to Cartagena now by car. I do not think there will be very much of it left—the planes came last night, while we were on the train, and they were there five hours. Well, I dunno. Maybe I will see you in England or you will come on my ship to New York and I shall be the purser again—but I dunno. If not it will be bad luck."

CYRIL CONNOLLY

THE LAW AND FOREIGN VOLUNTEERS

THE Government's legal experts are understood to be now examining the Foreign Enlistment Act with a view to determining whether it can be used to prohibit the despatch of English volunteers to Spain. The significance of this move is that it indicates that the Government are seeking a method of prohibiting British volunteers joining the Government side, for it is only upon this point that there can be any real and substantial doubt as to the law.

As the law now stands, it is in all probability an offence for British subjects or foreigners resident in England to enlist for the rebels or assist others to do so. Or, if it is not an offence to enlist, it is, at any rate, certainly an offence to fit out or prepare any military expedition to assist the rebels. Indeed, from a legal point of view, one of the most remarkable features of the Government's handling of the situation has been their refusal to take any steps against the Irish volunteers passing through Liverpool on their way to join General Franco's forces. Anyone aware of the legal position must have had grave doubts of the genuineness of the apprehension expressed by the British Government over the presence of foreign volunteers in Spain, knowing that it had been in the power of the British Government to prevent the despatch of the first and perhaps most openly organised of all the foreign forces sent to Spain.

The Foreign Enlistment Act was passed at the time of the Franco-Prussian war of 1870, and its primary aim was to deal with the situation then existing; but its terms were made wide enough to cover civil wars and insurrections. Penalties are imposed under the Act on anyone who accepts or agrees to accept "any commission or engagement in the military or naval service of any foreign State at war with any foreign State at peace with His Majesty." Anyone who leaves England or goes on board ship with the determination of enlisting abroad is in the same way guilty of an offence.

The interpretation clause of the Act defines a foreign State as including:

> Any foreign prince, colony, province or part of any province or people, or any person or persons exercising or assuming to exercise the powers of government in or over any foreign country, colony, province, or part of any province or people.

It follows that the Fascist forces in Spain are clearly a foreign State within the meaning of the Act. As, however, the Burgos Government has not been recognised by the British Government, it cannot be described as "a foreign State at peace with His Majesty." Thus, since the Act applies only to British subjects joining with forces at war with a friendly State, no offence can be committed by anyone who assists the legitimate Government of Spain to put down insurgents. In 1891, when an insurrection took place in Chile, the British Government permitted the Chilean Government to recruit in England part of the crew of a man-of-war—all the Chilean sailors having joined the rebels.

Furthermore, the Foreign Enlistment Act applies not only to the United Kingdom but "to all the Dominions of His Majesty," so that no question could be raised that the Irish volunteers were only recruited and organised in the Free State. Those of them who sailed from Liverpool were within the jurisdiction of the British Courts, and there was nothing to prevent them being arrested and tried.

The Act is clearly applicable to the Irish volunteers. The only doubt is whether, as the rebels have not been recognised as belligerents, it can be said that a state of war exists.

There is, however, a further offence of preparing or fitting out a military or naval expedition against the dominions of any friendly State. It was under this section of the Act that the Jameson raiders, who intervened before any war had started, were tried and convicted. This section, at any rate, applies whether there is a state of war or not; but it is interesting to note that, in his summing up in the Jameson

case, the then Lord Chief Justice, Lord Russell of Killowen, was apparently of the opinion that all sections of the Act applied equally whether there was a state of peace or war existing. Speaking of the general character and object of the Foreign Enlistment Act, he said:

> Its provisions were directed towards enforcing the strict neutrality of the Queen's subjects, and aimed at preventing the use of any part of the Queen's dominions as a base for hostile operations, not only against a Power at war . . . but also against the sovereignty or territorial integrity of a Foreign Power not then at war.

It is possible that it might be proved in evidence that the organisers of the Irish volunteers had not in fact done anything which brought them within scope of this section, but if the Government really intended to stop volunteers going to the rebels it is surprising that they have taken no action in the Courts to test the extent of their powers. Further, if the master or owner of any ship knowingly takes on board persons who have illegally enlisted, or who intend so to do, he commits an offence. Had the Government brought this section of the Act to the notice of the shipowners who transported the Irish volunteers from Ireland and from Liverpool to Spain, it is unlikely that any of them would have undertaken the legal risk of transporting the volunteers.

BARRISTER

TREMENDOUS TRIFLES

The Court of Claims has been sitting in the Chamber of the Privy Council since November 25th, to settle hereditary rights and duties at the Coronation, and to rule who is entitled to carry the Great Spurs, the Silver Wand, the Crystal Mace, etc., etc.—News item.

THE Coronation Court of claims
Holds its uninterrupted sitting,
And ceremonial order frames
Mighty minutiae befitting,
And with solemnity confers
On who shall carry the Great Spurs.

The Crown, which to the naked eye
Shows but a million diamond facets,
Has long been made top-heavy by
Imperial but precarious assets,
Dominions hanging by a hair,
The crux of Ministerial care.

Beneath the Crown the royal skull,
Anointed with symbolic unction
Must be spectacularly null
For its inoperative function—
About the Crown each guards his place,
So who shall bear the Crystal Mace?

Tides wash the Throne's great base and stop
Before that buttress, granite-bedded,
But gusts around the kingly top
Are constitutionally dreaded—
So Kings may from their place step down,
But who shall bear St. Edward's Crown?

Plunged in complexities extreme
Of ritual elaboration
The Court dismisses the supreme
Irrelevance of abdication.
Unbroken holds the Empire bond—
So who shall bear the Silver Wand?

Love conquers all, excepting these—
The Government and Opposition,
All parties here and overseas,
All clods of high and low condition.
They cry Kings shame, unkinged for love.
But who shall carry the King's glove?

SAGITTARIUS

MODERN FORMS OF STARVATION

IT is becoming more and more common to explain everything human beings do in terms of starvation or repression. People who go to the suburban cinemas, for example, are said to be suffering from emotional starvation. I met a man the other day who explained the comments of Bishops on public occasions by the fact that they are suffering from sex starvation. He did not, it is true, offer any evidence in support of his statement. It was the modern sort of thing to say, and he simply took it for granted that it was true. The curious thing is that if my friend had actually met a bishop and said to him: "Sir, you are suffering from sex starvation," and the bishop had retorted, "You, sir, are suffering from spiritual starvation," my friend would have thought the bishop old-fashioned. According to each other, however, we all seem to be suffering from various forms of starvation human beings never suffered from before. We cannot even look at the hoardings without being faced by the question whether we are suffering from night starvation, which is apparently the modern malady of maladies.

I am not sure that starvation is not too easy an explanation of human conduct and condition. Though not a teetotaller myself, I should be reluctant to accept as an explanation of Mr. Bernard Shaw's intervention in the Abyssinian War the theory that he is suffering from alcohol starvation. I do not believe that Mr. Shaw has even a repressed desire for alcohol, and I doubt whether, if he drank half-a-bottle of Burgundy every evening with his dinner, his views on public affairs would be modified in the slightest degree. I fancy a good deal of this talk about starvation is nonsense. It looks as if it meant something, and it means scarcely anything.

Take, for example, the theory that young people who go to see films are suffering from emotional starvation. What evidence is there that the cinema-goer of to-day is suffering from emotional starvation any more than the playgoer of the time of Euripides? People have loved acting and singing and dancing from an early period in the world's history, and they were interested in the loves of heroes and heroines many centuries before the invention of the cinema. I myself grew up in a world that did not contain a single cinema and I haunted the gallery of the theatre as persistently as any youth in his teens haunts the cinema to-day. Monday night found me in my seat, whether the play was good, bad, or indifferent: I preferred a bad or indifferent play to no play at all. Was this evidence of emotional starvation? It may have been, but a more rational explanation of my presence at the play seems to me to be that I was interested in the theatre, as I was interested in books, music, politics, cricket, farming, brands of tobacco, and the talk of my friends.

It is possible that all these interests might be explained as signs of starvation, but when an explanation becomes so universal as this it becomes meaningless. From what form of starvation, for example, are the crowds that go to see football matches on Saturday afternoons suffering? Is it emotional starvation or simply football starvation? I prefer to think of them as people who are not suffering from anything at all, but who happen to enjoy watching football. "Ah, but," it may be said, "there must surely be something wrong with anybody who prefers watching a football match to listening to a Beethoven symphony or reading a psychological novel." There is, I admit, always something wrong with other people's pleasures which we do not share, but may there not be something wrong with us in thinking there is something wrong with them?

Is it so certain that every spectator, except the most refined and intellectual spectator, in the cinema and the playfield, is emotionally starving? Is there the slightest evidence to suggest that emotional starvation is any commoner among the admirers of Greta Garbo than among the admirers of Proust? Obviously, the two bodies are poles apart in taste, but, emotionally, I fancy the intellectual is just as likely to be found in a starving condition as the shop-girl. It may be argued that,

whereas a Greta Garbo film introduces you to a world of make-believe, Proust introduces you to a world of reality. There is something in this argument, but at the same time it seems to me the ordinary reader of Proust enjoys himself largely because he finds in him, not only psychological realism, but a world so strange as to be almost unreal—a world in which the imagination can indulge in make-believe as freely as in any cinema. Who can doubt that the pleasure the young take—or once took—in reading Baudelaire was in great measure the pleasure of indulging in make-believe? Baudelaire introduced them into a fairyland of strange sins: this was none the less so because the introduction was made in perfect literary form.

Not that the love of make-believe is itself a proof of emotional starvation. Rather it is a means of emotional fulfilment. It begins in the nursery with *Cinderella* and *Beauty and the Beast*, and it continues so long as men can enjoy the imaginative arts. It is an element in our enjoyment of *Hamlet* and *Paradise Lost*, of the *Messiah* and of the paintings of El Greco. Some people despise the indulgence in make-believe as a form of "escape," but it is an "escape" only in the sense in which one may be said to escape when one leaves one's house in a Sussex village for a walk on the Downs. One is not, in fact, escaping at all (unless there happens to be a disagreeable guest in the house): one is simply doing what one wants to do most—enjoying a walk on the Downs.

Not, of course, that I deny the existence of emotional and other kinds of starvation; but I distrust facile generalisations about them. What kind of starvation, for example, are solvers of crossword puzzles suffering from? Some people would reply, "Intellectual starvation," but that reply would obviously be wrong, since among the solvers are to be found some of the brightest intellects of the age. The plain fact is, people solve crossword puzzles, not because they are in a state of starvation, but because they enjoy solving crossword puzzles. It is the same with playing golf or backgammon or taking an interest in cricket. And it is the same, I contend, with going to the cinema. If the cinema audiences are suffering from anything in particular, indeed, I should say that it is, not emotional starvation, but emotional repletion.

I came this week on what was to me a new form of starvation, which is referred to in Major Yeats-Brown's book, *Lancer At Large*. Here Major Yeats-Brown quotes a lady who explained to him that the Indian terrorists should not be called terrorists, but that they should simply be regarded as young married men who have been starved of romance. She did not use the phrase "romance starvation," but I do not think I am doing her an injustice in saying that this was her explanation of the activities of the terrorists. "As a matter of fact," she said, "sex has a lot to do with their going off to raid. They marry early, and they don't have any experience of love and courtship in the European sense, for their wives are chosen for them. There's no suspense or romance about their love-affairs. Many of them have had a large family before they are out of their 'teens. By the time they are twenty they have had a glut of marriage and family life. But they're passionate. From what my friends have told me, they're the most passionate people on the face of the earth. They have to have some outlet." Strange that a man should go out and throw bombs simply because he has a wife and family who do not fulfil his need for romance. It may be true that an unromantic housewife turns an occasional husband to thoughts of bomb-throwing. But, on the other hand, we must admit that the marriage of convenience has resulted in extraordinarily little bomb-throwing in France. We must also admit that, among the most efficient organisers of bomb-throwing and gunmanship in modern Europe have been many happily married men and men who were not married at all. The starvationist school of psychology, no doubt, would explain that all these terrorists, whether in Europe or in India, were suffering from one form of starvation or another—sex starvation, emotional starvation, or romance starvation. I do not believe it. I believe that all that they were suffering from was the illusion that the best and quickest way to bring a perfect world into being was to bomb and shoot at the upper dog and his large and unpleasant family.

No, I do not believe that the starvation theory explains either the ordinary bomb-thrower or the ordinary bishop. It may explain a bomb-thrower here and there and a bishop here and there; but the ordinary bishop or bomb-thrower, it seems to me, is misled, in so far as he is misled, simply by a dream of perfection. And may not the same thing be said of the ordinary cinema-goer? Is not he—or she—too, dreaming of perfection—the perfect love, the perfect sacrifice, the perfect surroundings, the perfect he-man, the perfect goddess? Vulgar, perhaps, but there is no evidence of starvation in it. One might as well say that women and children who munch sweetmeats are starving. They're not. Y. Y.

Correspondence

THE KING'S ABDICATION

SIR,—When I heard the familiar Norman-French words, "*Le Roy le Veult*," proclaimed by the Clerk of the Parliaments, thereby converting the Bill for the King's Abdication, passed by both Houses, into an Act of Parliament, I felt that never had they been so significantly charged with accurate meaning. Although the whole incident was unprecedented in the annals of British history, all the necessary formalities passed off in a very short interval of time with perfect smoothness, on greased wheels. So also in the public mind have hero-worship, affection and loyalty for one man passed through bewilderment and dismay to acclamation and welcome for his brother. No hitch. Criticism silenced, except for a hideous sprinkling of self-righteousness. Everyone concerned praised.

A moment of misgiving may have passed through the minds of many when they heard the last words, deeply moving because of their simplicity, of the departing King, whose voice betrayed almost uncontrollable emotion. As Parliament and the people resume their work, which for a few days has been dislocated, there may be opportunity for some reflections.

What do we demand of our King in the second quarter of the twentieth century? What about the family who by inheritance, not by choice, are obliged to take on the job? What sort of job do we impose on them? While we can change our King apparently with ease, are we going to maintain the monarchical system with the same ease?

Some people are still under the delusion that kings and princes have a very good time. This must be so, because they see them in their glittering uniforms smiling. Try smiling for several hours or for a whole day to absolute strangers. Think of Monday morning when the list of your week's engagements is handed to you. Monday: laying the foundation-stone of the new wing of the Drunkards' Home. Tuesday: to Birmingham to open the Exhibition and inspect the Hospital. Wednesday: a banquet for the Maharaja of Bangalor. Thursday: a review, with a public dinner at night. Friday: a journey to Land's End to open the new lighthouse. Saturday: a levee, the reception of the new Chilian Ambassador, a Privy Council and an audience with the ex-Governor of Timbuctoo. Is not the pursuit of almost any trade or profession preferable to this? Is it surprising that such an occupation may lead to extravagant reactions?

Then, perhaps, worse still, the flattery, the adulation, the butter laid on with a trowel and the nauseating sentimentality of the newspaper headlines. If you get on all right with your wife you are described as a paragon of virtue. If you are quite normally fond of your mother you are a saint. If you play with your children the camera-man is in the bushes. So the halo is riveted on to the Crown so tightly that if your humanity leads you astray and you happen to trip, as many decent men often do, then there is head-shaking, whispering and the gossip-mongers of the world, who personify the vulgarity of this age, begin sharpening their pens. This has all increased enormously with modern methods of publicity and with the organised determination to belaud royalty and smother them with insincere and hypocritical fawning and with a frivolity and snobbishness unknown in days gone by. Queen Victoria and Prince Albert were mercilessly ridiculed by *Punch*. In the middle of her long reign, the Queen's face, far from smiling, was seldom seen. Yet the monarchy suffered

nothing from this. But it is questionable whether the modern method, apart from the fact that it must exhaust if not disable the unfortunate family who are given the job, will not produce a dangerous impatience in those who are not so sure that monarchy is a beneficent institution. Surfeit eventually produces nausea. Crowds may collect in greater numbers because of methods of publicity and the new means of locomotion, but not from the exuberance of their loyalty, simply from the herd-love of excitement and pageantry. It matters not whether it be a jubilee, a funeral or a coronation. The royal family may be popular to-day; but crowds are capricious. The rivets of the halo have loosened on the Crown. If we want to keep the Crown let us finally dispense with the halo. Let us in decency leave the private lives of these servants of the people alone. We exact too much from them. Can we not in return respect their privacy? We are preparing for an orgy in six months' time. The greatest fear in the last few weeks was that the Coronation might be postponed. Edward VIII dreaded the ceremony, and let no one suppose that George VI and his Queen are looking forward to it. The stark reality of human frailty in a king has been exposed to us with dramatic realism by recent events. This may serve as a reminder that our sovereigns, whatever be their faults and virtues, are *human beings*. We must first sincerely sympathise with their humanity before we begin insincerely glorifying their sovereignty. If we want a robot monarch we can have one delivered from Madame Tussaud's overnight.

PONSONBY

SIR,—Your admirable comments of last week on "The King's Decision" must have faithfully represented most "Left Front" opinion. A few romantics, like Colonel Wedgwood, may drink to "The King Over the Water," but most of us will agree with you that "if it had come to a battle between Cavaliers and Roundheads, we should have been Roundheads all the time, even though being a Roundhead once again meant being a Puritan."

None the less Labour's fear of Fascism carried its loyalty to the Cabinet too far. The Obeisance to Baldwin turn was overplayed and the fact that the *Daily Herald* was solemnly commended in a leading article in the *Times* was menacing. When the "National Unity" flag is run up, recent history suggests that Labour's first duty is to think twice before saluting. However, that is over now. One factor remains, a factor on which you had not time or space to comment sufficiently last week.

The departure into exile of Mrs. Simpson and the Duke of Windsor is a smashing clerical victory and the cock-a-hoop tone of the Bishops last Sunday, led by the Primate, seems to me thoroughly sinister. Labour was so much concerned with the constitutional issue that it forgot the ethical and social side of it. You may say that Parliament won—and rightly. So did the prudes and the Pharisees; a dangerous victory that.

It had been common gossip for some time that the Bishops were angrily critical of the late King, before anything was said in public. That may or may not be so. The fact remains that the guns of the laity only went off when a bishop had gone over the top. Whether Dr. Blunt led the attack spontaneously or whether he was whistled up by his superior officers of York and Canterbury, we do not and need not know. The point is that the affair was quite as much ecclesiastical as political. It was an episcopal "putsch." The Duke of Windsor resembles the victims in most detective yarns. He was "bumped off" with a Blunt instrument.

No doubt, according to their principles, the Churchmen had to fight the proposed marriage of the King. Certainly they have won and those who regard clericalism as a menace to civil liberties should take warning from their present state of glee. The power of the Church of England was dwindling: that institution has some genuine Radical and Pacifist elements and some suave Liberal voices. But, on the whole, in town and village, it speaks for reaction. Impotent to create, it is still strong enough to interfere, destroy, and repress. Since it is an appendage of a capitalist State it dare not interfere with the major evils, war, poverty, and so forth. What it can do and does is to interfere with and oppose campaigns for rational, decent, and humane measures, like Divorce Law Reforms and provision of Birth Control Instruction. Now that repressive power has been reinforced by a great social victory, and this has unfortunately occurred at the very time when there seemed to be a chance of achieving some common-sense and humane alteration of the Divorce Laws. We may be sure that clericalism will now fight harder than ever to hold all its forts of intolerance and obscurantism.

It appears to be an essential part of Church (I do not say Christian) doctrine that men can only be good if they are miserable. In his broadcast sermon of last Sunday the Archbishop of Canterbury deplored the late King's "craving for private happiness": "Strange and sad it is that he should have sought his happiness in a manner inconsistent with the Christian principles of marriage and within a social circle whose standards and ways of life are alien to all the best instincts and traditions of his people." And so forth, a thinly veiled gloating over "the exile, who in darkness left these shores." Unlike Dr. Blunt, Dr. Lang, with true archi-episcopal tact, waited for his man to be down before he kicked him.

We may be thankful that the sentimental mysticism with which public opinion recently enveloped the Throne has been dissipated. A year ago it would have been deemed blasphemy to say a word against any member of the Royal Family or their associates. We of the Left Front like this new air of critical freedom: we like our bishops to be blunt. But we demand that freedom shall not be limited to episcopal scolds and turbulent priests. Furthermore, we strongly resent the assumption that the pursuit of happiness and acquirement of goodness are incompatible, an assumption which lies behind "the Christian principles of marriage" as expounded by our anti-divorce clergy, whose attitude to unhappy marriage is an aspect of sadism worth investigation. It is noticeable that the celibates are usually the worst in their hatred of seeing other people happy. In any case the recent victory of clericalism, celebrated with such whoops of joy by the Church last Sunday, is full of menace for all who believe in liberty of mind and conduct.

IVOR BROWN

SIR,—There was a solid family of people who hated anything new that was not "refined." They loved the show their fine horse and carriage made. Then the world took to motor cars and, though they felt that these vehicles were vulgar, they had to keep up with the times. So they were in a quandary. But they had a genius for compromise. So they got a fine car with a powerful engine and on the bonnet they put a mascot—a costly, richly decorated, life-size wooden model of a spirited horse. And so great is the power of symbolism that they were convinced that it was the horse that drew the car and not the engine that propelled it.

A small few could see that the horse was only a sham and they begged their elders to get a real one and throw away the vulgar engine. But they were romantics with their hearts in the past and they were only a few and no one paid much attention to them. A few others also saw that the horse was a sham and they begged that the costly, heavy mascot should be thrown away so that the engine could send the car along faster. But they were told they were mischief-makers and people of very doubtful taste and so they were easily silenced. And all the nice-minded members of the family—that is to say, nearly the whole family—lived in the happy conviction that it was the horse that was doing the work.

From time to time the mascot had to be renewed, but nothing shook the general faith in the successive horses. But the day came when a new mascot, an exceptionally beautiful, charmingly decorated horse, showed signs of life. He began to lash his tail and kick up his heels and behave generally in an alarming manner. Hastily the elders of the family removed the dangerous beast, got a new horse, rather less ornate but guaranteed harmless, and screwed him on to the bonnet. After only the slightest check the car went on in stately style. And so great is the power of symbolism that—but for the few romantics and the few who were of doubtful taste—the family remained convinced that it was the horse that was drawing the car.

C.

SIR,—We regret that in your comments on King Edward's abdication you simplify the issue into a conflict between King and Parliament, in which the British democratic tradition demands that Parliament's will should prevail. You thus adopt the position, not as a rule congenial to you, of apologist for the National Government.

We would point out (1) that, as Mr. Gallacher said in the House of Commons on Dec. 10th, Parliament has never been consulted about King Edward's proposed marriage; (2) the only substantial reason for opposition to the proposed marriage which the Prime Minister could give the House of Commons was that it would offend public sentiment.

Thus even on the surface—and to go below the surface would make too great a demand on your space—the issue was not a dispute between the King and Parliament, but a conflict between the King's wishes and public sentiment as gauged by the Prime Minister.

Further, given King Edward's insistence on the proposed marriage, the Labour Opposition was not faced with a simple choice between siding with the King and siding with Mr. Baldwin. In the event of Mr. Baldwin's resignation on the marriage issue, it was open to the Labour Party either (1) to refuse to take office; (2) to accept office as champions of the King's right to marry whom he pleased; or (3) to accept office and go to the country on the claim that the King's marriage was a side-issue, irrelevant to the real interests of the British people, namely, the elimination of poverty and the prevention of war, but admirably calculated to divert their attention from those real interests. Your comments only imply the existence of the first two alternatives.

We believe that had the Labour Party had the courage to adopt the third alternative, and had a General Election been fought on such a platform, the result would have been, at the worst, a greatly reduced National Government majority, together with weakening of their prestige and the dispelling of a good deal of the glamour of the monarchy: and we are dismayed at this latest indication of the gullibility of the official Labour leadership. Are the "loud and general cheers," with which the *Times* tells us that Mr. Attlee was greeted in the House, really worth the price?

C. C. BRADSWORTH
AUSTIN E. DUNCAN-JONES
LUCY HUTCHINSON
FELICITY A. IMPEY
M. L. JOHNSON
DUNCAN LEYS
A. M. NEWTH
H. G. NEWTH

Birmingham.

[We are only able to print a few selected letters from a very large correspondence on this subject. The Archbishop's broadcast, referred to in Mr. Ivor Brown's letter, has provoked many similar but usually more violent comments.—ED., *N. S. & N.*]

THE *ANGLO-GERMAN REVIEW*

SIR,—My attention has been drawn to a letter about the *Anglo-German Review* in your issue of December 5th, in which the writer says "it would be interesting to know whence its funds are derived and what connections it has with the 'Anglo-German Fellowship,' whose Nazi propaganda is already notorious."

I do not agree with the suggestion that the "Nazi propaganda" of the Fellowship "is already notorious," but I can satisfy the two questions raised. Firstly, the Review has no connection with the Fellowship, although the two pursue the same objective, which is the fostering of Anglo-German friendship. Secondly, the funds of the Review are derived from Anglo-German Publications, Ltd., an entirely British company.

The rest of the letter does not seem to call for any comments on my part. The Review styles itself independent and non-political, because it owes allegiance to no political party. It was originally projected some ten years ago, and if it had come into being then it would have accepted the German Government of that time as willingly as it accepts the German Government of to-day. It does not belong to that class of publication which is willing to promote peace and international good will only in respect of countries whose Governments conform with its editorial policy.

Anglo-German Review, 6 Warwick Court, W.C.1.
C. E. CARROLL, Editor

"JAMAICA"

SIR,—On a very early page of my book, *Jamaica*, I expressed the doubts that I felt whether many English readers would apprehend its significance. I therefore am not surprised at some critics missing it: but Mr. W. M. Macmillan's review in to-day's NEW STATESMAN AND NATION appears to me unnecessarily arbitrary in its substitutions for understanding.

He represents that "the book makes no claim to be a history," that "the research *still required* is left to painstaking students," and only secondary authorities quoted. That is an easy, airy, mode of discrediting the reliability of my record. The representation is not accurate. I did not write nor does what I wrote (see p. ix of the book) imply what your reviewer says I "expressly" did—nor did I use the words he imputes to me by quotation marks. The book is, and claims to be, the only attempted social and economic history written about the period with which it chiefly deals. I spent about four years' hard work transcribing, and, as I expressly say in the book, *summarising*, the first-hand sources of evidence on which it is based. Those sources are not only comprehensively indicated in the brief introductory bibliography (see pp. ix and 451), but are extensively quoted from, and specified in many later notes. I said that I hoped that *Jamaican* students might improve on my summary. To judge from the local commentaries I have already received, such Jamaicans are unlikely to endorse Mr. Macmillan's strictures.

Mr. Macmillan says, most astonishingly, that I make "a strange tilt at 'Development,'"—in a chapter which is wholly devoted to the eulogy and advocacy of State development policy, constructive and educational, in contrast with the traditional capitalist policy of individualist *laisser-faire* and finance. Mr. Macmillan apparently cannot have read that chapter. As to "autarchy," I merely said (p. 431) what most Jamaicans think. Mr. Macmillan protests that the Barbados common people are better educated and more civilised than the Jamaicans. I did not, and do not, as he suggests, propound the contrary. I said and say, that Barbadian workers are far less prosperous. South Wales is highly educated and highly civilised, but our capitalist economy is failing to make it prosperous. Many Africans prefer a form of civilisation that feeds them and their children. So do I.

The moral of my survey seems to me to be that—as I first wrote about thirty-four years ago in *White Capital and Coloured Labour*—Africans, if they have land, may prove capable of neutralising and defeating the accepted Imperialist system of capitalist exploitation, and will possibly in the long run do so. I do not see how this can be regarded as "encouraging British opinion in its besetting sin of complacency." I wish British opinion were more addicted to discerning that possibility with complacency.

Bognor Regis. OLIVIER

BROADTAIL AND ERMINE

SIR,—I would not trespass on your valuable space to contradict the statements in Major Van der Byl's letter, were it not for the fact that I believe the Major to have a large following of persons who are only too ready to believe the fantastic, or who lack the special knowledge required to see the fallacy of his arguments. I should like to point out to your readers the following facts, which can be easily verified.

The Persian Broadtail lamb is not prematurely born, unborn, stillborn, or any other form of abortion, but it is the perfectly naturally born lamb of a very carefully bred, finely selected, and much-cherished sheep of the Persian Lamb or Karakul type.

Galiak is the name of the Persian Broadtail or Karakul that has by some misfortune, been prematurely born. Galiak skins have little commercial value as the leather is extremely delicate, and the fur lacks that characteristic Broadtail marking. As a Galiak skin is worth only 10s. when dressed and dyed, as against 140s. for the Persian Broadtail, an unnatural birth represents a very serious loss to the breeder, which he makes every endeavour to avoid. A breeder who treated his flock in the gruesome manner described by Major Van der Byl, would, I believe, be locked up as the lunatic he was—even in Russia or Asia!

Major Van der Byl's informant does well to remain incognito, and in view of the wide publicity which some of the Major's statement attains, it is to be greatly regretted that he does not take a little more trouble in verifying the misleading information he so persistently broadcasts ARTHUR POLIAKOFF

11, Clifford Street, W.1.

Miscellany

PIRANDELLO

THE death of Pirandello, at the age of sixty-nine, is a great loss to literature: he was the one great Italian writer of his generation, profoundly original and at the same time representative of the greatest traditions of his country. His reputation, particularly as a dramatist, is international and world-wide; the performances of the Pitoeffs some years ago at the Theatre Antoine, in Paris, and their short season in London, brought him before the most intelligent audiences in Europe. An artist of great originality frequently arouses a curious hatred, which, I think, is because he reveals the tastes and tendencies of the future, which are very different from the threadbare optimistic day-dreams of the plain man. This, no doubt, is the explanation of the strange terror which the Philistine exhibits at being made to feel something strange and new. I mention this because in England the Philistine hatred of originality was particularly directed against Pirandello. He was regarded much as Ibsen was forty years ago, hated

because he was admired by the hated "highbrow," and was regarded as a particularly "highbrow" author. This, I believe, was a mistake. It is true that as a dramatist Pirandello was always playing with ideas and that on that account very stupid people might not understand what was going on upon the stage. But the same is true of *Hamlet*, which is far harder to follow than anything of Pirandello's, but which has always been popular. No doubt the fear and suspicion of an original artist are much greater now than in the seventeenth century. It is also true that *Six Characters in Search of an Author* does seem extremely "highbrow" in print, though actually the idea of the characters in a book or a play having an independent existence, apart from the work of art in which they appear, is far more characteristic of the plain man than of the artist. It is the ordinary man, and not the artist, who believes with the Father in *Six Characters* that:

> When the characters are really alive before their author, the latter does nothing but follow them in their action, in their words, in the situations which they suggest to him. When a character is born, he acquires at once such an independence, even of his own author, that he can be imagined by everybody even in many other situations where the author never dreamed of placing him; and he acquires for himself a meaning which the author never dreamed of giving him.

Perfectly true—but it is the attitude of the Philistine to Pickwick or Peter Pan rather than that of the creative artist.

It is a revelation, however, to see Pirandello acted. *Henry IV* is one of the most exciting plays I have seen on the stage: I should not call it any more highbrow than *The Duchess of Malfi*. The *Six Characters*, *Henry IV* and *Right You Are* all depend for their effect not on specially "highbrow" or fantastic or philosophic ideas, but on a duality of plot. In each the action which occurs on the stage, though intensely dramatic, is directed to probing and revealing the even more thrilling drama which has happened in the past, which is laid bare, first from one aspect and then from another. *Henry IV* is a play which would thrill the most unsophisticated audiences all over the world. The terrific speeches in which "Henry IV" suddenly casts aside his pretence of madness has exactly the same kind of dramatic power as we find in the Elizabethans, whose plays, let it be remembered, were to a large extent Italian in subject and taken from Italian sources. In a chapter of *Euphorion*, Vernon Lee discussed, somewhat in the style of Pater, to what an extraordinary extent the imaginations of Webster, Tourneur, Ford and Shakespeare were influenced by the stories of Renaissance Italy. Italian crime, Italian cruelty, and Italian richness inspired the whole Elizabethan drama; the same traditional sources are the secret of Pirandello's dramatic power. He is, as a dramatist, far more akin to Webster than to Ibsen, or Tchehov, or Strindberg. The subjects and the persons of his plays—a wife from a lunatic asylum, a nobleman who lives for years disguised as a madman, ghostly characters stalking the earth in search of the imagination which will bring them to a fuller existence—all these are just the material employed by Webster and Tourneur, except that Pirandello has put the philosophy of modern pragmatism into their mouths. Listening to what they say seems to have blinded many critics to what they are.

When we leave the plays and turn to the stories we see even more clearly how strong is the traditional Italian element. I write from partial knowledge as I only know those stories which have been translated, which are less than a quarter of the whole. But if I may generalise from them, Pirandello employs no tricks in his stories, but is in the line of direct descent from Boccaccio and Apuleius. *A Call to Duty* is one of the best stories on an improper subject that I remember: no writer has treated the husband's return from quite such a comic, practical point of view. Pirandello's best stories have the quality of good rustic anecdotes; one feels that one might have heard them told in a Sicilian wineshop. But where the peasant story-teller depends for his effect on the fact that his audience know the people about whom he is gossiping, Pirandello has the gift of making one know them as though they were one's neighbours. Yet he never breaks the thread of his story to describe them: they come alive in action like characters upon the stage. The story of the *Jar*, which, I believe, has been turned into a pretty ballet, is one of the best farcical village anecdotes I know. A new jar, almost as tall as a man, is bought for the olive pressing; it is broken and a famous riveter is sent for to mend it. He puts the rivets on inside and finds that he has sealed himself into a prison. The owner quarrels with him, demanding compensation and the farce ends with a carouse and dance round the unfortunate prisoner. Pirandello's unusual merit as a story-teller is that he has preserved the quality of the primitive story-teller whose tales have been told and retold by generations of mankind. This is not the whole of him by any means: many of his stories show a modern tenderness of heart, and pity for the weak and suffering. His death is a great loss; it is to be hoped it will at least have the good result of our being given a complete translation of his works. Two volumes of plays are published by Dent and two volumes of stories by Lane.

DAVID GARNETT

GO AND SEE

The Witch of Edmonton, at "The Old Vic," is a most remarkable production of a Renaissance drama. It has caught the spirit of that drama so completely and projected it so vividly (thanks to a most judicious use of modern pictorial devices) that, speaking for myself, the performance has unskinned my eyes. The cloudy film through which I was used to read the works of the Elizabethan and Jacobean dramatists was thick. Now I feel like an old man from whose eyes a cataract has been skimmed by a skilful surgeon. I no longer see the characters in that drama "like trees walking," and to see them thus had, to be candid, bored me. On my part this article must therefore inevitably be a paean of gratitude for recovered sight. I bless the day that brought M. St. Denis to our shores. Few stage performances had given me more complete satisfaction than those of the "Compagnie des Quinze" when they visited us under his direction. What, I ask myself, after seeing *The Witch of Edmonton*, may he not do for our stage, now he is here, now he has established a school for acting in London?

The vital thing, the all-important thing, in reviving the drama of the Renaissance, or indeed of periods less remote, the Restoration for example, is to make us moderns somehow become the audience for whom they were written and acted. If we are to derive more than an archaeological pleasure from such performances, or if we are to be protected from responding to them as though they were contemporary plays (in which case the sincere verdict must often be "dead and rotten"), we must somehow be inveigled into watching the stage with the eyes of those who were then alive. What we expect from a dramatic entertainment to-day is not what they expected and enjoyed, yet it is possible to make us feel and see through their eyes. It requires some psychological tact to enable us to do so, but it is possible to achieve this transmutation. *The Witch of Edmonton*, at "The Old Vic," is a proof of it. The producer must do justice to the *subtlety* and the *crudity* of the drama he is asking his actors to interpret. Its subtlety, on the one hand, is often even in advance of our own stage; its crudity, on the other, is often of an enormity which would shock in the crudest melodrama of to-day. Thus, we must be induced to make two apparently contradictory alterations in our normal receptivity; we have to make ourselves sensitive in some directions and blunt ourselves in others. How can we be persuaded to do this? The performance at "The Old Vic" shows how it can be done. Go, and test the result on yourselves.

In the first place the setting, the behaviour of the characters, must transfer us into a world where, on the stage, sensation, in the sense in which we use the adjective "sensational," was a primary aim of the dramatist. Sensationalism at all costs—at the cost, if need be, of consistency and probability. If

people were not such art-snobs, they would see that Shakespeare, too, never forgot that a maximum of sensation was also his business as a dramatist. They got in poetry and character-drawing, but the transmission of a crude direct thrill was the *sine qua non*. Hence the horrors, shudders, tortures, most improbable histrionic repentances, operatic death-speeches, noble but unlikely tributes to virtue on the part of villains, which abound not only in the work of his contemporaries but in his own. The ingenuity of modern or romantic commentators has read psychological profundities into these devices for sensation where Shakespeare is concerned, and the miracle is that his enormities can so often be made to bear such interpretations, forced though those interpretations often are; how forced Professor Schücking (*Character Problems in Shakespeare*) has shown. But no production of Shakespeare, let alone of his inferiors, is worth a dump which does not reproduce this atmosphere.

It is not to be achieved by reproducing *as exactly as possible* the conditions of the Elizabethan and Jacobean stage. We want to-day more help than bare boards can give. Shakespeare the dramatist has been frequently killed by overloaded scenery—that is true. We must keep the machinery of his stage as far as possible for sake of exits and entrances, and we must banish literalness from such properties and backgrounds as we do employ. The scenery and costumes must not compete with reality, but they must be capable of suggesting it to audiences more habituated to realism. The Renaissance audience were like children—they could "pretend"; we have to be beguiled into believing. It is through the eye that this is done: the picture is therefore psychologically important. If we get pleasure from what is before us, the demand for realism is hushed in us; we look and forget reality. The scenery can be treated as pretence. It can be shifted before our eyes, as at "The Old Vic," as long as it pleases after it is assembled. Its perfunctory and yet aesthetically pleasing properties also help us to concentrate attention on the emotions and to prepare us not to demand too much realism in the behaviour of the characters on the stage, and that is most important. For the Renaissance audience were more childlike than we are in this also: they did not demand consistency in character-drawing or probability in events to be moved by the emotions displayed before them.

It is often said that human nature has not changed, and this is true as far as the passions are concerned. But there has been one change, slow but intensifying down the centuries, which has made an extraordinary difference to life and art: men and women have become increasingly self-conscious, therefore more aware in themselves and others of the inconsistency of what is felt by human beings at different moments. We are ashamed to yield so completely to contradictory impulses from moment to moment. If we were bodily transposed into the age of Elizabeth (and it is still more true of earlier times) those who surrounded us would strike us as almost insanely inconsequent. We should be flabbergasted by the untroubled serenity with which those people shifted from one point of view to another, out of one mode of feeling into another in perfect good faith. This is reflected in the drama of those times. There is no getting away from that; we must not ask of this old drama the consistency we ask from dramatists to-day. I could tear *The Witch of Edmonton* to pieces by applying the criteria I would apply to a modern play—not the first act, which is a model of interesting preparation, but its connection with the sequel. What has the story of Frank Thorney and Winifred to do with old Mother Sawyer and her witchcraft? The two themes are so slightly and unnecessarily connected by her familiar, "the black dog." Young Thorney needed no supernatural instigation to stab the girl, Susan, he had bigamously and lovelessly married in order to secure his father's goodwill in the matter of his inheritance. He was in the sort of fix, having already married his true love Winifred, out of which the criminal finds that sort of escape. Again, Mother Sawyer becomes a witch in order to revenge herself on the brutal Old Banks, but she uses her evil power to revenge herself on Carter by instigating Frank Thorney to murder his daughter. But if you criticise the play from that point of view you are as lost as if you applied the criterion of probability to the tragedy of Othello. You must let the emotions in the play swamp you, and the triumph of the performance at "The Old Vic" is that it enables you to be, for once, as naively receptive as a groundling in the days of James I. How is this done?

First, through the acting. There are three major performances of very high merit; three of the main parts are played so that strong emotions are from moment to moment vividly transmitted, however difficult those emotions may be to assemble together as expressions of a consistent character by the modern self-conscious analytical intellect—namely, Miss Edith Evans's playing of the Witch, Mr. Marius Goring in the part of Frank Thorney, and Miss Beatrix Lehmann as Winifred. Both latter parts are in their way as difficult, if not more so, but Miss Evans has a greater share of the play to carry. She is tremendous—her voice (the energy of it!), her hobblings and gobblings, her defiance of her persecutors, her rancour and bitter self-pity. If I have, and I have, one criticism to make of a performance which inspired both astonishment and admiration, it is that she did not make enough distinction between her virulent vindictiveness before she has gained, through her pact with the Devil, the power to revenge herself, and after. When she first appears gathering sticks to warm her poor old bones and is belaboured by the brutal Banks (vividly played by Mr. William Devlin), she is one of the most pitiful, in spite of repellent hideousness, of all figures in Renaissance drama. We must continue to pity her as a victim of ignorant superstition afterwards, but I think, when she has struck her bargain, that pity should be more modified by the spectacle of a festering hate in her than Miss Evans sometimes allowed it to be. Yet pity we must continue to feel. It is very difficult indeed; perhaps it is best done by a crescendo of boldness or by her cringing less. The dramatists (Ford, Dekker and probably others) intended us to feel the pathos of the utter loneliness implied in the old hag's fondling endearments towards "the black dog," her one friend who also finally deserts her. (How well Miss Evans acted then!) But also the sinister filthiness of them—almost impossible to convey to a modern audience. Witchcraft, bestiality, are hard to hint at, though "the black dog" itself was an exceedingly disquieting apparition.

Secondly, this projection of our imaginations into a past more emotionally chaotic and crude than the world we live in, is helped by the scenery. M. St. Denis had an inspiration. The atmosphere he was creating for this drama was one in which modernity and the Middle Ages blended. When men went about their business they moved in a world of rational daylight; but when they stopped to feel imaginatively, or when the shades of night came on, their misgivings drew them back into the past age of hobgoblins and evil powers; an age when the drama of the soul standing betwixt salvation and damnation was more real than sufferings either inflicted or borne. In their terror they did awful things to each other. In order to project the brutality and density of the times, he has drawn on the pictures of Breughel for his rustics; an artist whose work is saturated with the horrible, the uncanny and the earthiness of common folk. Ignorance, fear and wild laughter—where could he have found better pictorial suggestions for the atmosphere needed? Old Banks in his leather jerkin, and the crowd of witch-hunters, come straight out of the canvases of Breughel, and so does the better sort of rustic like Carter. The same galumphing jollity breaks occasionally the macabre humour and crass cruelty throughout.

Lastly, the frankness with which its sensationalism is faced. There was nothing to be done but drive that well home; the piling up of the agony, as in the scene of Frank's remorse when he lies in bed after his crime, was not shirked—the ghosts which haunt him, the dead body of the murdered Susan in her coffin, brought to his bedside. Though part of the audience may titter, their laughter is tinged with dismay.

Frank's contortions, temporary recoveries and ultimate despair, when the faithful Winifred has inadvertently betrayed him, deserved high praise. If only all the actors had spoken in Miss Lehmann's clear bell-like tones! She had two very fine moments; one when listening to Frank's confession, one earlier, when she explains the tears in her eyes which might have betrayed her to her rival, Susan. Twice this fortnight I have seen actresses whose fame is still crescent, play their parts to perfection: Miss Lehmann as Winifred, Miss Gilian Scaife as Trebell's sister in *Waste*. Mr. Alec Guinness was thoroughly sound in the part of the good, kindly Carter, only he did not rise to that strange passage in which the discovery of his murdered daughter wrings from him a violent (yet subtle) expression of the tremendous possessiveness of his grief:

> Sir, take that carcass there, and give me this
> I will not own her now; she's none of mine.
> Bob me off with a dumb show! no, I'll have *life*.

"This is my son, too," he says of Frank, who has wounded himself to appear a fellow victim instead of the murderer, "and while there's life in him, 'tis half mine. Take you half that silence (meaning his daughter's body). When I speak I look to be spoken to. Forgetful slut!" Hard to speak, you will admit, but if spoken rightly what a complex thrill there is in them.

The clowns were the only failure, if the dying strains of exalted sweetness which proceed from the mouth of the twice-stabbed Susan are excepted. What is to be done with the Renaissance clowning yokels or rustic fools? Their jokes are dreary, their mirth now incomprehensible and depressing. I do not know; perhaps it is best to play them slowly, as the Marx Brothers act to-day, and not with fictitious and uninfectious gaiety. I did not like the clowns. And what is to be done with the noble dying speeches? To us the pathos of death lies in the "frightened eye" and "huddled, unintelligible phrase"; to the Renaissance, death was the last scene of life's drama when it became man and woman to make a supreme effort in *le beau rôle*. No wonder their drama was "stagey," when to them life itself was a stage! It was an age when Death was a King of Terrors to be out-faced, outplayed; when Sir Philip Sidney died to the strains of his own poem set to music, *La Cuisse Cassée*, and dying Dr. Donne was painted in his winding sheet. It is the complete acceptance of the theatricality of *life* in those days that makes the performance of the play at "The Old Vic" such a triumph. And what a world it was; merciless, neurotic, violent, a wild muddle which was also the mother of strange, beautiful things. The last scene of the Witch's and of Frank's repentance recalls in its grandiose simplicity the end of *Crime and Punishment*.

DESMOND MACCARTHY

PLAYS AND PICTURES

"The Boy David," at His Majesty's

A pretty little Bible play, one would have said, if it had been acted in the Parish Hall and written by the vicar's clever wife. But Sir James Barrie, and some of the best actors in England, and about a hundred supers, and Mr. Komisarjevski and Mr. Augustus John and Mr. William Walton and a charming donkey —all play their part in a mountainous parturition, and what emerges is a clockwork mouse for the nursery. The notion behind the play is that the Bible is all wrong about David: he was really a feeble cissy little boy, whose mighty deeds were the work of "Him," "the Other One" (Jehovah). There is little action —Goliath, alas, remains off-stage—and the best scene is the meeting between David and King Saul whom he takes for a shepherd: this is whimsical enough, but on the whole Sir James is much less elfin than usual. Like Shakespeare at the end of his career, he seems to have lost interest in the dramatic effects of which he was a master. The weakest feature of the play is the lingo in which it is written, sham Authorised Version, eked out with a little *Kismet* or *Chu Chin Chow*. The Oriental atmosphere, for instance, is enforced by pronouncing Jerusalem with a Y instead of a J. The best performance comes from Mr. Godfrey Tearle, whose voice and presence are magnificent; Mr. Leon Quartermaine, Miss Jean Cadell, Sir John Martin Harvey and Mr. Ion Swinley do all that can be done with their ungrateful parts. Miss Elizabeth Bergner plays the boy David, and her performance is a *tour de force*. There is no living actress who could give a more convincing imitation of one of Miss Italia Conti's female pupils. When she wrestled with an imaginary lion, one saw what vast accomplishment was being squandered upon a singularly inappropriate role. Her make-up, however, was unfortunate at the performance we saw; her legs were dark walnut, her face almost chorus-girl pink—one could only suppose that David never went for a walk without a parasol. Mr. Bobby Rietti rivalled Miss Bergner in the exoticism of his accent and the girlishness of his appearance. Altogether a play to which you can safely take the smallest kiddies for a Christmas treat.

"Hortobagy," Shown by the Film Society at the New Gallery

The Film Society is to be congratulated on its presentation, as part of its ninetieth performance, of this leisurely and delightful film of Hungarian peasant life—and indeed on its entire programme last Sunday. A Disney Silly Symphony, a decorative Swedish short, showing the elaborate stage mechanism of the eighteenth-century Drottningholm Theatre, two eye-opening fragments of ancient celluloid, dated "Italy, before 1914" and "Russia, 1912"—the last named, cryptically introduced in the programme-notes, robbing the Society's recent Russian exhibit, *The New Gulliver*, of much of its novelty—led us contentedly to the calm, beautiful, full-length documentary, *Hortobagy*. The film has for plot, reduced to a bare and welcome minimum, "the inherent drama of struggle between the forces of modernity and a waning culture of remarkable ethnographical interest"—that of the Hungarian horsemen whose herds roam wide but steadily diminishing plains. The machine encroaches on the land, the young *csikos* falls a simple prey to its inevitable, insatiable attraction. . . . The boy who played this part had assured us at the outset, in engaging English, that he and the other members of the cast were not professional actors but—proudly—"Hungarian shepherds and peasants." There was not one scrap of acting in the film, though the young hero was injured in an accident at an oil well, a suitor was jilted, a couple fell in love, and two old lovers were reunited after long years spent apart. None of these humans *acted*, any more than their animals. Fine scenery, music, architecture, Nature and photography made this lovely picture—and all this fineness was direct and innocent, utterly simple.

THE COMING WEEK

FRIDAY, December 18th—
- Discussion between Lord Allen and Gerald Heard on "Pacifism and War Resistance," Friends House, Euston Road, 8.
- Meeting on Spain. Speeches by H. N. Brailsford, W. Mellor, J. F. Horrabin and Others, Essex Hall, Strand, 8.
- Artists' International Association. H. T. Rhodes on "Crime and Art," Small Conway Hall, 8.15.

SATURDAY, December 19th—
- Carols and Christmas Music, Victoria and Albert Museum, 3.

SUNDAY, December 20th—
- Herbert Read on "Art and Religion," Conway Hall, 11.
- North London Film Society, "Moana," Monseigneur News Theatre, Strand, 2.15.
- Meeting on Spain. Speeches by Leah Manning, D. N. Pritt and others, Finchley Dance Hall, Great North Road, 7.30.
- John Lehmann on "A Poet in Soviet Georgia," Marx House, Clerkenwell Green, 7.30.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 21st—
- Bertrand Russell on "Which Way to Peace," Peace Pledge Bookshop, 36, Ludgate Hill, 1.30.
- "Friday the Thirteenth," Everyman Cinema.
- Spanish Youth Foodship Committee. Farewell Meeting to the Ship. Speeches by D. N. Pritt, J. Langdon-Davies and others, Shoreditch Town Hall, 8. Contributions for foodship can be sent to Helen Jeger 37 Great James Street, W.C.1.

TUESDAY, December 22nd—
- International Circus, Olympia.
- Conference on "Next Steps in Spain," Speeches by Wilfred Roberts, Eleanor Rathbone and others, Essex Hall, 7.30.
- "The York Nativity," Mercury Theatre.
- "Balalaika," Adelphi Theatre.

WEDNESDAY, December 23rd—
- "Your Number's Up," Gate Theatre.
- "Heart's Content," Shaftesbury Theatre.

NEW NOVELS

Together and Apart. By MARGARET KENNEDY. *Cassell.* 7s. 6d.

Song on Your Bugles. By ERIC KNIGHT. *Boriswood.* 7s. 6d.

Duet in Discord. By ELIZABETH GARNER. *Arthur Barker.* 7s. 6d.

Now that God's G-men, nimbly seconded by the Oldest Inhabitants, have got their man; now that the amused contempt of nine-tenths of the United States has been assured for a generation; and now that the delicious stench of sanctimony and prejudice fills, to repletion, every upturned nose in an Empire made safe for hypocrisy, I imagine that there must be a crisp demand for Miss Kennedy's treatise on the dangers of divorce.

Together and Apart is certainly a book by a professional, the relief attendant upon which, to-day, may only be measured by a reviewer: it is properly cooked, thoroughly digestible. Often, it is something more than simply appetising. But the sad thing is that Miss Kennedy's characters, though they live, somehow remind one of people so self-conscious that they can only bear to be observed in one position. The profile from one side only, just so; the smile, the frown, just so. If, cautiously, one begins to peer, they move relentlessly round, like lighthouse lenses, and there they are again—just so, and as flat as photographs. In her earlier books, the characters were not quite so one-sided. Another general, if lesser, fault, is a partiality for premonitions, for signs and wonders. The validity of one character, the mother, is advanced by emphasising her self-awareness of being "psychic." As one reads on, however, quite a number of other people become infected with the odious habit of thinking of things simultaneously, or of recognising, at one eagle glance, a friend crawling along the horizon. I think this is a gloomy, embarrassing way to pep up a novel, and I am convinced that it is a mistaken one.

Miss Kennedy's subject is the harm that can accrue for everyone concerned from a divorce. The story opens at a point where the parting of a rich, agreeable couple, Alec and Betsy, might have been avoided. A violent quarrel, unconsciously engineered by the most complete character present, Alec's mother, sends him packing. He takes with him an afterthought, in the shape of Joy, the young lady help, and from this moment both friends and children see to it that all is for the worst. Variations on a theme, the ensuing discomforts are, on the whole, very well done. There is one passage where Joy, the blockish, infatuated mistress, realising that she is in danger of boring Alec away from her, decides to read a volume of Shaw—"Once, long ago, she had been a great reader." Here, for a time, one receives more than one dimension, and the result is both tragic and convincing. Betsy, the rather bossy wife, has her moments, too, particularly when she is trying to persuade herself to marry a saintly but unprepossessing peer. On the other hand, the son, Ken, is presented with progressive weakness. While the figure of Mark, his great school friend, becomes more and more like T. E. Lawrence, he himself slides lower and lower into the clutches of an inscrutable crew of sneering boys whose private lives are of a nature that Miss Kennedy cannot bring herself to disclose. I found this most vexatious. Not because I pine to wallow in the secret horrors of public-school life, but I object to them being puffed up into a carefully vague nemesis.

All things considered, I feel it was unskilful of the authoress to collect, and shower, such a variety of possible misfortunes. She has by no means written a book in which one cannot at all believe. It is far above the average. At the same time, she should somehow contrive to be more stereoscopic; she should load the dice less in her favour, and she should try to abjure mystifications, coincidence and second-sight.

Mr. Knight, too, deals his own work a terrific blow when the hero and head heroine turn out, three-quarters of the way through, to be brother and sister. Incest is the very least one can demand of an author who takes this short cut to drama, but Mr. Knight affronts us with the customary renunciation. Nevertheless, there are compensations. *Song on Your Bugles* is the life-story of Herrie, a Yorkshire millworker who is also a painter. For lack of a better word, I suppose it must be called a proletarian novel, and it reveals aspects of life in the North that struck me as amazing, and inexpressibly moving. Although one knows, having once begun to read, almost exactly all that is coming, and although the sequence could hardly be more banal, the book, by virtue of singleness of purpose, hangs together. It is grounded on the realities of our time. When I add that the author is only too delighted to use words like "venusty," and that he is capable of including pages of conversation such as this,

"... When the mural's done we're all going to the south, to Devon. Father'll paint and I'll write sea yarns and Marjorie'll do jolly gloomy tone-poems of Ahes of the Waves and Uther in Tintagel, and you'll do stiff old seascapes with the waves looking like frozen cotton-wool—and sand will get on your palette."

"And the dead fish on the beach will stink like anything," put in Marjorie.

it may be understood that there are disadvantages. But although the "art" sections are generally agonising, the "factory" sections are superlative, and well worth the pain. Herrie's several jobs—bottle-blowing, boiler-making—are described with precision, and considerable beauty. When the writer is content to allow Yorkshire to be Yorkshire, and permits the hero to be a human being instead of a demented assistant at Windsor and Newton's, there is nothing to complain of, and much to praise. Finally, Mr. Knight has only to clear his mind on certain questions of taste and economy: everything will be fine—once he can dismiss, on sight, the fluffy word.

Duet in Discord is set among the ravishments of the West Indies. What, quite, one would have thought of this purely personal romance were it set in Yorkshire, for example, I don't know. It is difficult to tell how far one has been seduced by the tropical names and details. I cannot, myself, withhold a fondness for any book in which the characters habitually feast on toads, and flying fish with lime sauce. About an unhappy love affair between a woman of forty-three and a man of twenty-six, it begins with naive elaboration. All through there is a slowish, almost skulking tempo, and it is when this can be disregarded that the book assumes unusual, serious and remunerative qualities. The crisis comes when the young man is suddenly stricken with psychologically induced impotence, the reward of excessive chastity. Thenceforward, one watches the melancholy struggle of two persons, exceedingly in love, for whom that which they are constantly seeking, and needing, is forbidden. The effect is cumulative, and the closing moments of unwilling but remorseless cruelty on the part of the man are exceptionally well-conceived. Such a book might so easily, of course, have wandered off into the

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murky and tautological. As it is, the impression given is one of a growing clarity and inevitability: the wrangling, the reconciliations, the spiritual and physical miseries appear astonishingly real. In consideration of its fairly encouraging conclusion, and the fact that it combines, as it does, a great deal of interesting and salutary information about sex with some exquisite pictures of natural objects in one of the more remote portions of our Empire, I would like urgently to recommend this volume, not only to the ordinary adult reader, but also to the schoolmaster, for distribution, and to the Archbishop of Canterbury, for reasons of my own.

BRIAN HOWARD

THE INTELLECTUAL MORALIST

The Olive Tree. By ALDOUS HUXLEY. *Chatto and Windus.* 7s. 6d.

Mr. Huxley is sensible and sensitive, erudite and witty, he thinks logically and writes lucidly. He has, therefore, well deserved the contempt of those who admire the philosophy of Lawrence and the learning of Mr. Pound. As a novelist he suffers from too great a native asceticism. He is too cerebral to understand silliness, too fastidious to sympathise, even momentarily, with vileness. The unreasonableness, the animality, the absurdity of human beings attract him intellectually, and repel him emotionally. Like Swift, and unlike the great novelists, he is profoundly and predominantly moral; so it is an odd irony that a writer whose chief weakness is an excess of puritanism should be vulgarly considered as a master of scatology.

The sixteen papers collected in *The Olive Tree* cover a variety of subjects, and include admirable studies of Benjamin Haydon and D. H. Lawrence which appeared as Introductions, and the lecture on *T. H. Huxley as a Literary Man*, which was delivered to the Royal Society. The most important of the new papers is *Writers and Readers*, an inquiry into the methods, limitations and possibilities of propaganda. And here he introduces a theme which recurs in several of the essays and which evidently is preoccupying Mr. Huxley:

> Passion and self-interest may be our chief motives; but we hate to admit the fact even to ourselves. We are not happy unless our acts of passion can be made to look as though they were dictated by reason, unless self-interest be explained and embellished so as to seem idealistic.

This conception, due chiefly to Freud (though it is adumbrated in La Rochefoucauld, I think, and in some of the great Christian moralists), is one of the governing and specific ideas of our time. The greatest figures of the past now often seem to us hypocritical or at least childishly naive, because they were so little conscious of this process. "The thirst for rationality or righteousness is almost as insistent as the thirst for sexual pleasure and for the gratification of pride," Mr. Huxley says again, in an admirable essay called *Justifications*, in which he considers the vagaries of certain religious men who succeeded in reconciling their high principles with their sexual desires. He brings fascinating illustrations from the careers of Lawrence, Oliphant, Coventry Patmore and Prince of the "Agapemone." "A complete history of justifications would be, to a great extent, identical with a history of thought. Most political, ethical and even cosmological systems have been essentially justificatory." The conclusion is one sentence: "To think correctly is the condition of behaving well." The diagnosis of this intellectual moralist seems inescapably correct. But how are we to think correctly? It seems to me—and I suspect that Mr. Huxley would agree—that incomparably the most important desideratum is a progress in applied psychology. This would bring with it changes in the economic system: without this, such changes, however desirable, must remain inadequate. Abolish poverty by all means, but do not suppose that this is equivalent to abolishing wickedness or folly or unhappiness. If all the intelligence and energy now being spent upon improvements in applied physics could be spent upon improvements in applied psychology, there would be some hope for humanity.

I think that this is the most important conclusion to be derived from Mr. Huxley's book. But he never exhausts us with exhortations. The more moral essays are all enlivened with apt and entertaining illustrations, and the subjects are very various. The paper on T. H. Huxley contains some very close literary criticism, the *Haydon* is a brilliantly concise and pathetic portrait, the *Lawrence* is the best thing yet written about that invalid genius, and *The Olive Tree* contains passages about landscape and painting which remind us that painting is Mr. Huxley's favourite recreation. Here is one quotation:

> Your grey tree and its background of bare bone-like hills, red-brown earth and the all but black cypresses and pines are within the range of the most ascetic palette. Derain can render Provence with half a dozen tubes of colour. How instructive to compare his olives with those of Renoir! White, black, *terra verde*—Derain's rendering of the grey tree is complete. But it is not the only complete rendering. Renoir was a man with a passion for bright gay colours. To this passion he added an extraordinary virtuosity in combining them. It was not in his nature to be content with a black, white and earth-green olive. His grey trees have shadows of cadmium green, and when they look towards the sun are suffused with a glow of pink. Now, no olive has ever shown a trace of any colour warmer than the faint ochre of yellowing leaves and summer dust. Nevertheless, these pink trees, which in Renoir's paintings of Cagnes recall the exuberant girls of his latest, rosiest manner, are somehow quite startlingly like the cold grey olives which they apparently misrepresent. The rendering, so different from Derain's, is equally complete and satisfying.

I began by calling Mr. Huxley an ascetic. It is true, I think, that his lack of sympathy for the coarser pleasures cripples him as a novelist. But he has a powerfully sensuous response to the beauties of music, poetry, architecture and natural beauty. "Being intrinsically detached is no joke. . . . One has no real human relations: it is the complaint of every artist." These two sentences from Mr. Huxley's account of D. H. Lawrence strike one as a cry from the heart. In this book we see the rewards of this detachment, and the consolations.

RAYMOND MORTIMER

HEIL, HEISER!

A Doctor's Odyssey. By VICTOR HEISER. *Cape.* 15s.

Left Turn! The Autobiography of John Paton. *Martin Secker and Warburg.* 12s. 6d.

Theatre of Life II. By LORD HOWARD OF PENRITH. *Hodder and Stoughton.* 21s.

In my experience it is very, very seldom that a reviewer feels any impulse to cry out from the housetops: Read this book! Dr. Heiser's is a book for everyone, it seems to me, who reads anything. Only, how can one possibly give a fair idea of it?

However: Dr. Heiser is an expert on tropical diseases and their prevention. He was for many years Director of Public Health in the Philippines; afterwards he joined the Rockefeller Foundation; his work has taken him to sixty-odd countries, and sixteen times round the world. He has saved—how many lives? It seems they must long ago have got beyond computation. In the Philippines he began modestly with the goal of fifty thousand a year, "but this was so soon attained that I realised it should have been set at one hundred thousand." Fortunately, he was provided with nine lives of his own to do it all; among other hair-raising experiences, he has been scratched by an insane leper with cholera, and taken a morning plunge into a complete circle of sharks. It was typical of Dr. Heiser to get away from them; he is a man of infinite resource and sagacity, and the most enviable sang-froid. Moreover, he is as good at talking about illness as at preventing it. His chapters on plague, cholera, smallpox, etc., are simply fascinating. His good stories are so numerous that I shall quote none. He has something of interest to say about every race he has come in contact with—incidentally, he may induce some disapprovers of empire to change their minds. His remarks on "the British"—whom he considers a great joke—ought to do us good. In short, read this book.

Now we come to earth again. Once more—as with *Proletarian Pilgrimage* and *Theatre of Life I*—Mr. Paton and Lord Howard of Penrith appear neck and neck. I had a foreboding that Mr. Paton the I.L.P. organiser would be less amusing than Mr. Paton the barber's assistant and traveller in ready-made false teeth, and this has, in fact—as Dr. Heiser would say—eventuated. With all its strong flavour of reality, its sketches of Labour leaders, account of the General Strike, and so on, *Left Turn* is dullish—at least to anyone not absorbingly interested in the mere subject. It is rather dismal, too, and might more suitably have been called "The Ebb-Tide." The Left-wing squabbles and schisms it chiefly deals with come to seem more parochial almost with every chapter, till at length one feels nothing about them except a dim and dreary astonishment that in this world anything should ever get done at all. Not that Mr. Paton has any such feeling. Secession suits him; he can break with group after group without, apparently, the least diminution of certainty that his cause will triumph. This may be magnificent, but—is it really politics?

NEW STATESMAN'S *Christmas Gift Offer!*

¶ In December, 1923, we invited readers of THE NEW STATESMAN to give six-monthly subscriptions as Christmas and New Year Presents, at one-third the usual charge, i.e., Five Shillings instead of Fifteen. The idea found a ready acceptance, and last Christmas we received twice as many as in any previous year. Such increasing popularity demands repetition this year, and already some hundreds of readers have responded.

¶ There will be less than a week left before Christmas by the time most people receive this issue. To our friends abroad we take the opportunity of saying that they may respond to this offer at any time. The only condition we make, to Home and Overseas readers alike, is that the recipient of the introductory subscription is not, to the donor's knowledge, already buying the paper.

¶ We are willing to forgo two-thirds of our usual rate on these Gift subscriptions to new readers, because we have found that this is the best method of introducing the paper. On the other hand, our special offer enables readers to make a present worth fifteen shillings at the cost of only five.

¶ For some time now, THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION has enjoyed the largest circulation of the weekly reviews, but its steady growth month by month proves that it has still a long way to go before it reaches its possible maximum. Here, therefore, is a means whereby readers may make appropriate and acceptable Christmas and New Year Gifts to their friends and, at the same time, help this journal to find new readers.

¶ To every recipient we will (unless we receive contrary instructions) send a postcard, advising him or her that the paper is being sent under the instructions of the giver.

It is not necessary to cut out the form below if readers will state, when sending subscriptions, that they accept the conditions printed thereon.

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His character ought to appeal to those critics who despise ornament. It is very Scotch, and, though without charm, it contrives to be sympathetic. For one thing, Mr. Paton can always be relied on for the plain truth; his remarks, for instance, on coming to live in England, are the very model of what Mr. Farfrae *ought* to have said. He knew the "correct idea" in such circumstances; his friends in Parliament were always regretting their native land, and he was used to David Kirkwood proclaiming on public platforms that his heart was in the heilands o' bonny Scotland. "But these emotions were not for me. Scotland was well enough; it was my homeland, and I could and still can feel a sentimental tremor about it on occasion, in the right circumstances. But I'd no deep objection to turning my face southwards with the intention of making my home there."

Of course, Mr. Paton is proud of his honesty. He has an excellent conceit of himself altogether; and he will not, I am sure, mind being called truculent. On the other hand, it is his boast to "give and take hard knocks" without personal feeling; one need not doubt that he possesses the faculty, only he must make an exception for Mr. Ramsay MacDonald and those other Labour men who harrowed up his very soul by attending at Buckingham Palace in "correct" costume. No political event seems ever to have disgusted him quite so much; his view of life is rather one-dimensional, though high-principled.

And I cannot help feeling Lord Howard's to be rather more "what the age needs." This writer is as far from truculence as a man of principle can well be; indeed, so sweet-natured that one feels a world of Lord Howards would be scarcely distinguishable from the millennium. Unfortunately, *Theatre of Life* was not intended for a wide public, and will not, probably, be much read. It is a family affair (he says so explicitly, but we could have guessed it); if outsiders should care to look in, they are very welcome, but they must take what is going. For Lord Howard writes confessedly as an amateur, putting down just what occurs to him, the trivial, the important, the (to an outside) wholly uninteresting—it may amuse someone. His tone throughout is perfectly charming, irresistible, in its modesty, and in any case the uninvited can hardly grumble, yet it does seem rather a waste of good things to dilute them like that. For there are plenty of good things. Lord Howard has been Ambassador in Sweden (during the war), in Spain, in America. He knows a great deal. He has some amusing stories (especially about the Peace Conference) and some decided opinions—especially about peace. For instance, he strongly denounces the League's "aggressor" as a will-o'-the-wisp. The League, he says, was founded "for the great purpose of preventing war, and not for the purpose of sitting in judgment on other nations and pronouncing verdicts of a moral character." In fact, aggressor-hunting serves only one end, but that effectually—it wastes time. A new Geneva must recognise that its proper quarry is the "persistent and intractable belligerent," aggressor or not. Also, he would like to see much more stringent dealing with the "tertius gaudens." In Sweden he had experience of this neutral attitude, which he calls "unsavoury"—a strong word for him.

K. JOHN

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Trease has now written four books which have been translated into several languages (his Russian royalties on *Bows against the Barons* enabled him to travel all over the Soviet union): they are *Bows against the Barons* (1s.), *Comrades for the Charter* (1s.), *Call to Arms* (2s. 6d.) and the new one, MISSING FROM HOME (3s. 6d.).

For parents of younger children (4 to 9 say) we have two little books, *The Enchanted Fishes* (6d.) and *The Little Pig* (6d.). These fairy stories have none of the too frequent upper class snobbery but just rub along with an undercurrent of comradeship. They are, above all else, stories.

We have also just published a DEMOCRATS DIARY (6d., 9d. post free)—what you will write in it not even Critic knows, but there are already 64 pages of useful information for Democrats.

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STEPHEN MACKENNA

Journal and Letters of Stephen MacKenna. Edited with a Memoir by E. R. DODDS. With a Preface by PADRAIC COLUM. *Constable.* 18s.

Stephen MacKenna's name was not widely known in his own lifetime, though scholars and literary critics acclaimed his rendering of the *Enneads* of Plotinus into English as one of the great translations of our age. In a lengthy memoir the new Regius Professor of Greek at Oxford has paid a generous tribute to an unusual scholar and master of English prose. When MacKenna started his great task, which took him twenty years, the scholars of the world, as Prof. Dodds tells us, were holding their hand from either re-editing or translating Plotinus, fearing to risk their professional reputations in pioneering this vast track of dangerous and notoriously difficult territory. The adventure was undertaken by an ex-bank clerk and struggling Irish journalist who had forgotten his school Greek. "In the army of scholarship MacKenna was destined to fight to the end as an irregular," writes Professor Dodds, and, incidentally, this record illustrates the stupidities of convention. Lacking a University degree, this scholar and stylist was forced to complete his task against hardship and in poverty. One of the greatest authorities on Elizabethan literature and eighteenth century drama, known throughout Europe, is a self-taught Belfast commercial traveller. He lacked a degree, however, and worked as a factory hand in America during the war. To-day he subsists on a small civil list pension. So the tragi-comedy of the learned world persists!

Stephen MacKenna was an almost legendary figure in Dublin to those of us who knew him. He had shared scanty meals with Synge in Paris, he had fought for the sacred soil of Greece in the Turkish war of 1897, he had swept out a restaurant for a livelihood in New York. As a journalist he had caught the eye of Pulitzer, the American newspaper king, and had been appointed continental correspondent in Paris with a staff of assistants and a princely salary. He cast the post aside with a magnificent gesture and returned to Dublin to throw all his energy into the revival of the Gaelic language and to undertake his great work of translation. More than all this, in a city where conversation was still recognised as an art, this moody scholar was an incomparable talker, astonishing all with his grace, wit and imaginative eloquence. Only those who know how difficult it is to weave together hearsay and recollection will realise the task which Professor Dodds has accomplished so successfully. This is a living portrait of the man, but it is slightly idealised, and Professor Dodds passes lightly over MacKenna's oddities. George Moore shocked his conservative neighbours by having his door painted green, MacKenna horrified a highly respectable suburb by his queer taste in music. I remember calling once at the house and being told with awed gestures that Mr. MacKenna could not possibly be disturbed. I had called, in fact, on the sacred Thursday evening on which his concertina teacher gave him lessons in the attic.

MacKenna, much to the surprise of his friends, remained opposed to the Irish Treaty and stood aloof while super-patriots engaged in an undignified scramble for jobs. He was horrified by the atrocities of the Civil War and the execution of hostages in which the Provisional Government satisfied its blood lust. But he remained, as his letters show, impenitently a Republican. With that logical consistency which is so often expressed in an Irish "bull," he refused to live in the Irish Free State and retired to England. Racked by ill-health, he spent his last years in a workman's cottage in a Cornish mining village, "where he was able to live on an income of £2 a week while he awaited death."

BY THE AUTHOR OF
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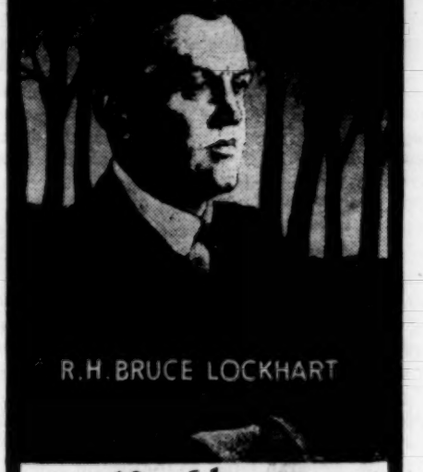

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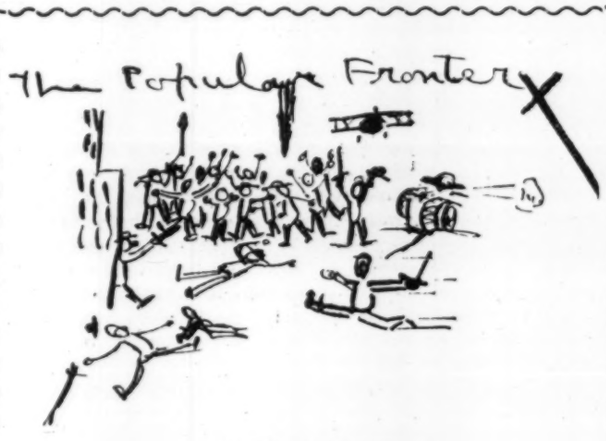
This is the first complete *biography* to be published in English of the great painter whose life was already a legend before his death in 1903. "If Mr. Burnett debunks that legend," says the *Sphere*, "he tells a story stranger than fiction . . . a fine biography." Sir John Squire (*Daily Telegraph*) says of the book: "The account of a character and history which is fascinating quite apart from the merits of Gauguin's works."

COBDEN-SANDERSON



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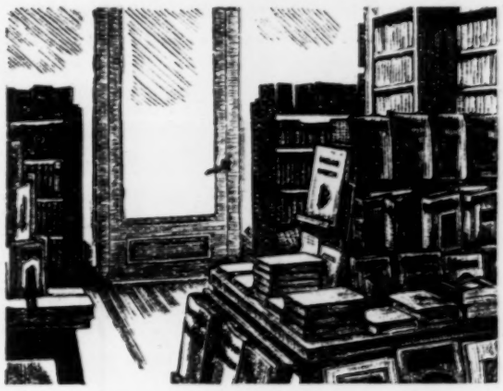

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MacKenna, in his task of translation, set himself against the "Verrall-Jebb pseudo-grand-days-of-yore-ish-sham." His Journal, written in the peaceful days of 1908, shows how worthily he prepared himself:

> For years I played foolishly with "the Phrase," seeking the bubble, self-esteem, even in the canon's teeth, defying all the sanctities if only I might anyhow please myself with a yell and a flare and a fit of ribald glee: now only I begin to know that it is not "the Phrase" that counts to any good; it is "la Phrase"—the Sentence, the orderly, suave and gracious setting of the true word in the clear meaning. This is the anatomy of style, as anatomy is the beginning of medicine and of surgery, of painting and of sculpture. The glory is to come later, if it ever comes; as a man must first be sober before he can be a saint, and learn to behave himself before he climbs into the pulpit.

The Greek text of Plotinus managed to escape barbarous centuries, but few would probably attempt a task like MacKenna's in these days of uncertainty. Yet MacKenna worked in a dark period through the Great War and the Black-and-Tan period when at any moment his place might be raided. In his modesty he baulked at the idea of a cheap edition without revision of his translation, which still remains in the expensive Medici volumes. Surely, however, an inexpensive reissue of this superb translation is now possible.

AUSTIN CLARKE

TWO POETS

A Trophy of Arms. By RUTH PITTER. *Cresset Press.* 5s.
Devil's Dyke. By CHRISTOPHER HASSALL. *Heinemann.* 5s.

Two years ago Mr. Belloc predicted permanence for the poems of Ruth Pitter. In his preface to *A Trophy of Arms*, Mr. James Stephens seconds the motion. But I have, so far, waited in vain for a general vote of thanks from the recipients of review copies of *A Trophy of Arms*.

All that I have discovered has been a paragraph of chilly disparagement in an influential weekly, wherein Ruth Pitter was informed that "she lives in the timeless inner world and writes accomplished devotional poetry on the seventeenth century model. . . . When Miss Pitter's poems are interpreted in terms of the outer world, they are liable to appear sentimental." "A good poet," concludes the reviewer, "is not afraid to say that poverty means a bunch of chrysanthemums snatched out of someone else's dustbin."

In other words, Ruth Pitter has not consulted any neo-pedantic recipes for writing flat verse with a lofty political purpose. Could she hope to satisfy those clever critics who know everything about poetry except how to recognise the real thing when it is put under their "adult-minded" and propaganda-loving probosces? Lamenting the unpopularity of modern poetry, one of the intelligentsia told us, quite lately, that the poets of to-day are "in the arena fighting for their very existence." This is not true.

Poets do not fight for their existence. They are not made, but born. They either write poetry or fail to do so. Ruth Pitter writes poetry. Some of it is comparable to Collins' *Ode to Evening*. For she reveals that "inner world" of hers with perfect control of visual imagery, writing with serene honesty and a craftsmanship which is always in harmony with its material. Seventeenth-century poetry has influenced her, but her idiom is a personal one. In *The Lost Heritage*, for instance, I am just aware of Henry Vaughan; but the whole poem has grown from the soil of its author's mind and belongs to no one else. The fifty-seven poems in this book are remarkable for their variety of form. And they have that new awareness of the world which cannot be acquired by self-conscious effort. Reticent strength and sensuous alertness; epithets temperate, transparent and surprising; an utterance urgent, flexible and direct; these are their qualities. The observation is as minute and faithful as Hardy's or de la Mare's. Rhythm and cadence, thought and imagery, are simple or intricate as suits each poem. I will quote one of her loveliest lyrics, leaving the rest to the certain glory that awaits them.

> Close, mortal eyes: open, my eyes in heaven.
> On consolations that the poor devise,
> On the clay image and the candles seven
> Close, mortal eyes.
>
> Open upon the plains of the merry land,
> Eternal eyes, on joy for ever whole:
> Return with tidings I shall understand,
> Eyes of my soul.
>
> The soul has eyes: alas, she has no tongue,
> She has no word of all the mysteries,
> No syllable that may be said or sung,
> Close, mortal eyes.

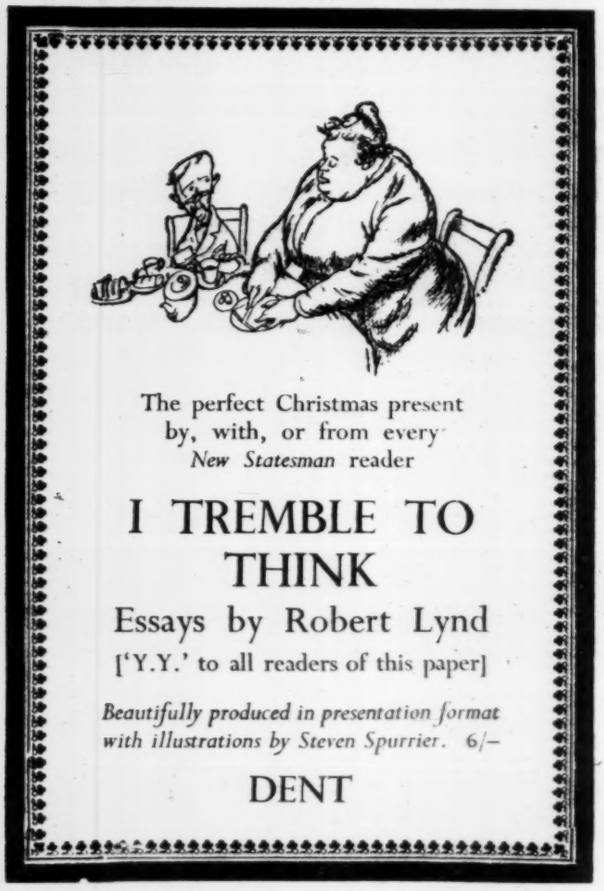
Christopher Hassall's work is of that kind which provokes an immediate emotional, spiritual response in readers sensitive to poetry. Unfortunately the criticism of poetry to-day has fallen largely into the hands of those who have no natural response whatever to the poetic and can only justify the attention they give to the poetic by reference to standards which are strictly irrelevant. The old contention that any subject is the right subject, provided that the poet and the method be right, has been so developed that we now hear the claim that no subject naturally poetic is right, and no treatment that recognises tradition by allegiance rather than by rebellion. Mr. Hassall will probably be told that he is altogether behind the times because he does not conform to the current cant of machinery-poetising and so on.

But in *Devil's Dyke*, a dramatic allegory of the country, he only "escapes" from facts into truth. There is no evasion of life in the poem; only a refusal to admit that life is more truly expressed, for him, by a mechanism which is destructive of life.

Devil's Dyke is based on the old legend of Satan's incursion into Sussex, one of the earliest kingdoms of England to be Christianised. The characters of the drama are Satan, a Shepherd who represents Everyman in his timidity, the Spirit by which men hear God's voice, and the thinkers of an ancient age. The Shepherd is pitted against Satan, and wins. The theme, therefore, is of the oldest tradition in man's history, by which the weakness and "silliness" of the humble overcome the craft and subtlety of the proud.

Mr. Hassall is a young poet, and his verse often has the derivative quality of youthful integrity and unpretentiousness. He is not afraid to write of "the golden reassurance of a star" (which I much prefer to "the smear of petrol on a suburb puddle.") On every page there are epithets of startling felicity, and this speech of Satan's may serve to show his quality:

> Before I fell, I was the morning star,
> A skylark feather'd with cool gold, crowning
> The day's accession with a silent song,
> Fear'd only by the fond initiates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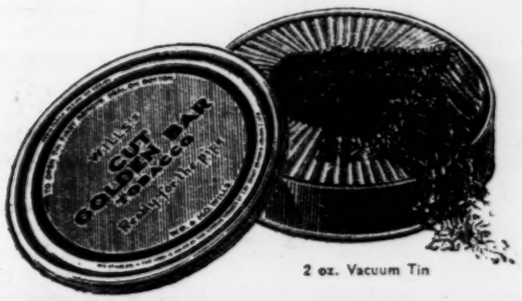

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Of love, whose altar is the moon. The birds
Catching my mystic note while yet asleep,
Would rouse already in mid-song, and buds
Lifted their prisons to the light. At last
The ploughman saw me, and his leathern coat
Would creak because of his encouraged stride:
From my blue place in nothingness I shone
A benediction on the heaths of peace,
And piloted the fire-rigg'd daybreak.

I have not the smallest doubt that Mr. Hassall will ultimately be recognised as a very fine poet indeed.

SIEGFRIED SASSOON

GENTEEL EPISTLES

"Dear Miss Heber . . .": An Eighteenth-Century Correspondence. Edited by FRANCIS BAMFORD. *Constable.* 8s. 6d.

Eleven trunkfuls of letters, disinterred by Mr. and Mrs. Sacheverell Sitwell from the attics of Weston Hall, have been made to yield as their firstfruit this modest volume. Slight as it is, it has two prefaces, not counting the editor's, and close on sixty pages of notes and index—much cry, one is disposed to comment, and little wool. (Though Mrs. Sitwell's preface, especially, is very disarming.) One says this first, in the hope that anyone similarly put off will think better of it.

For the wool is—simply the raw material of Jane Austen's novels. Here, indeed, the speaking parts are all female (If they correspond, said Elinor Dashwood of her sister and Willoughby, we shall know that they are engaged), and the social level is a degree higher than in Jane Austen—the advent of a Lady Dalrymple would cause no flutter. But we are in the familiar atmosphere all the same.

The earliest of these writers, Miss Mary Curzon, is also one of the liveliest—with something of the charm of Lydia Bennet, but more intelligence and, no doubt, "conduct." Lydia, however, was not a good correspondent, and Miss Curzon shows the same tendency to prefer life. "I find so many letters owing that I think I shall be puzzled. 'Tis a delicious neighbourhood, Mary, hardly a morning but somebody calls in." And after her marriage, almost at the beginning of the volume, unfortunately, we cease to hear from her. From that moment the unquestionable star is Miss Iremonger. Miss Iremonger is a Romantic ("If you are fond of beautiful Strains of Melancholy," she writes of Mr. Bowles's Sonnets, "Read them by a Stream or over a Rock"): she has a passion for solitude, a professed distaste for "what is commonly called Gaiety," and a habit of boasting, like Mrs. Elton, of her "resources within." "To know *me*," she says very justly, "is to know my *opinions*." At an early stage, we are given her opinion on matrimony:

> If ever you see me married, it will be to a man *out* of what is commonly called *the World*, who has that sort of Taste and Feeling which is reckoned very unfashionable, who knows how to prefer *Employment* to *Ennui*, his *Farm* to *Newmarket*, and a Domestic Life to all others. The Duty of the Wife would then be to endevor to become every Day more worthy of this distinguished Blessing and to be continually gaining Improvement from his superior mind.

This paragon, perhaps fortunately, never turned up, and Miss Iremonger continued undisturbed in the enjoyment of "those sort of valuable *female* Friendships that are the best substitute for the other kind of Connection"—freely pouring out her views on literature, sentiment, and the French Revolution, for which, like Wordsworth, she was an enthusiast at its commencement. On the great subject of health, she would have enchanted Mr. Woodhouse:

> Bad Health, like every other allotment of Providence, I have always considered as given us for the exercise of certain peculiar Duties, and those not merely of the patient, resigned, quiescent kind, though I allow them their due merit, but to call our attention to the wonderful Structure of the Human Frame, to its delicacy and liability to be disordered, and to the kindness of Providence in placing it within our own powers often to relieve these inconveniences while it pleases Him that our Lives should be continued.
>
> We have Understandings to discern our evils and our blessings, and ought we not in gratitude assiduously to apply them to suit our Diet and the benefits of Air and Leisure to our Health? to see, acknowledge and make use of those healing Plants and Minerals which the Earth affords? and to consult on these Subjects those of God's creatures who, like Sir W. Farquhar and others, have directed their Powers of mind to these Objects?

All this in reproof of Miss Heber's "indifference to every means of assisting the natural weakness of her Constitution." Seldom is Miss Iremonger herself without these "peculiar Duties," though once she does give a good account:

> I am, I thank God—and you for the inquiry—remarkably well in health, and this circumstance is the more agreeable as poor Dr. Fraser has been confined to his bed within the last week and attended for a Liver Complaint.

After all, one would not like to think of Miss Iremonger in Jane Austen's clutches. She should be dealt with more tenderly. In an earlier Cranford no doubt she would have found herself very comfortable.

K.J.

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In the Steps of St. Paul. By H. V. MORTON. *Rich and Cowan.* 7s. 6d.

A Journey to Jerusalem. By ST. JOHN ERVINE. *Hamish Hamilton.* 10s. 6d.

Mr. Morton and Mr. St. John Ervine went off this year on the same cruise. These two books are the result of it. When Mr. Morton left the boat he went carefully over the ground covered by St. Paul, and his book is an untheological report of what he saw with as much archaeology thrown in as was necessary to make what Paul saw imaginable. Mr. Ervine's book is a very different kettle of red herrings. His picture of the places he visited resembles those masterpieces of the amateur photographer which he exhibits with the explanation "Yes, that's Aunt Emily. You ought to be able to see the Great Pyramid behind her, but it got a bit muzzed." Mr. Ervine is his own Aunt Emily. Some places were visited by both writers so that the books overlap somewhat.

Mr. Morton is clear, vivid, and economical in his descriptions of the scenes of the wanderings of Paul. He mingles his own observations and anecdotes with a little scholarship about the life and times of Paul. His anecdotes are good:

> "And what is that bronze arm sticking out near the ikon?" I asked.
>
> "That," I was told, "is the arm of a Turk who tried to light his cigarette from a holy taper."

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He deals with the *O Tempora, O Mores* theme with as much restraint as is possible in the circumstances :

> How strange that clear-eyed Athene, that Artemis with her bow and quiver, that the lady Aphrodite herself, should have haunted groves which seem designed by a benevolent providence to prepare the mind of a Government official for retirement to a house called "Pine View." And the strangeness of it grows, for, climbing to the top of the great mountain where Zeus once assembled his thunderbolts, the surprised traveller comes suddenly on hard tennis-courts.

He accepts traditional history without seeming to have examined the evidence very thoroughly. Amongst higher critics Mr. Morton is practically a fundamentalist. One hates to think what Lord Raglan would make of this book. Mr. Morton's emotions on viewing scenes presumably visited by Paul are reasonably restrained and his speculations on what the apostle "must have" seen, done, or felt are few. He cannot however resist Cleopatra.

> . . . the crowds on the river bank could smell the perfumes burning on the ship. How often must Paul have heard this story told by old men who had seen Cleopatra.

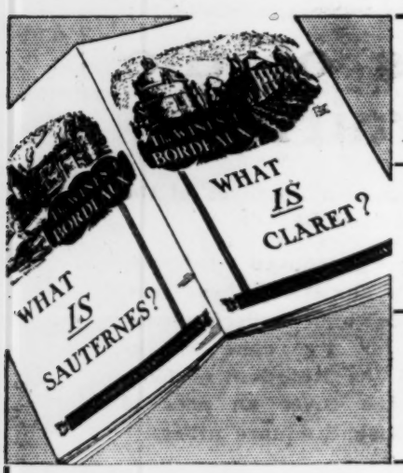
Mr. Morton has remarkably little to say about the character and work of Paul, and easily avoids the theological question of whether his influence on Christian doctrine was good or evil; but he is curiously sure that the apostle was neither prim nor surprisable by the wickedness of the sophisticated world.

> Some writers have imagined the Apostle walking in amazed horror between lines of Athenian statues. I do not believe this. Neither the life nor the religion of Athens could amaze St. Paul. Had he not lived in Syrian Antioch? Graven images were to him an abomination, but he had seen them every day of his life.

In the Steps of St. Paul is split up into short sections most of which are rounded off with a dying fall like this.

> Small wicks, burning in glasses of olive oil, pricked the darkness. Brazen lamps, hanging, on chains, also held these little tongues of flame. In the Rotunda there was silence. On the marble floor before the Tomb of Christ, a peasant woman was kneeling in prayer. There was no one else.

Although the absence of a real central theme has made it episodic and difficult to read straight through, this book is satisfying. Mr. Morton has done an extremely thorough and workmanlike job.



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Mr. St. John Ervine writes with great gusto. Everyone he met on his tour was either a dirty scoundrel, a dithering imbecile, an infernal nuisance, or a very fine fellow. As Mr. Ervine has more to say about his guides than about the places he visited, this becomes tiresome after a while. He has a number of pleasant travel tales to tell and he tells them vigorously. But by far the greater part of his book consists of digressions, historical, philosophical, political, religious and autobiographical. Can Mr. Ervine have taken *Beyond the Mexique Bay* as his model? Of the historical digressions, that on J. T. Wood, the discoverer of the Temple of Diana at Ephesus, is the most interesting. Mr. Ervine disapproves of Plato at some length. Plato apparently was a smug prig who is responsible for Fascism and Communism and all intellectuals. Mr. Ervine deals with *The Laws* thoroughly, and makes a number of good debating points against them. He does not, however, sound reasonable even when he is being reasonable. He cannot expound his common-sense anarchist objections to the doctrine of the efficient State without cocking snooks at Mr. De Valera, Mr. H. G. Wells, St. Augustine, and the Roman Catholic church. Anyone who is interested in Mr. Ervine's prejudices will find them loudly, naively, and frequently paraded on most pages of this book. Unfortunately Mr. Ervine's ideas are neither as new nor as startling as he seems to think them. His Protestantism for example is hardly new. A great deal of thin fun has been had by numerous writers with the multiplicity of Christian relics since Calvin wrote his rollicking work on the subject. And Mr. Ervine has nothing new to offer on the subjects of the Virgin Birth, the "gentleness" of Jesus, and his relationship with his mother. However he has rewritten the life of Jesus in a human way. The clinching sentence of his comparison of Jesus and Paul gives the tone exactly.

> I feel that I could have slapped Jesus on the back, and have called him "old chap" but that I could never have taken such a liberty with Paul.

The political opinions and technique of reminiscence of Mr. Ervine may perhaps be gathered from this modest anecdote :

> I recall Lowes Dickinson when, on the only occasion I met him, I sat and listened to him lecturing on progress and civilisation. Very nervously I had asked him a question at the end of his lecture. How much of the Greek civilisation he had praised so highly was due to the existence of slavery? He finessed with the question and left me unanswered. It was an awkward question to put to a Socialist don.

A Journey to Jerusalem is an oddly adolescent piece of work to come from a writer of Mr. Ervine's reputation. It would do credit to an undergraduate.

FREDERICK LAWS

SHORTER NOTICES

Livy, Books 38 and **39**, translated by E. T. SAGE ; **Remains of Old Latin (Vol. II)**, translated by E. H. WARMINGTON ; **Demosthenes, Private Orations (Vol. I)**, translated by A. T. MURRAY ; **Aristotle, Problems, I-XXI**, translated by W. S. HETT ; **Plutarch's Moralia (Vol. X)**, translated by H. N. FOWLER ; **Lucian (Vol. V)**, translated by A. M. HARMON. *Loeb Classical Library. Heinemann.* 10s. each vol.

This new batch of "Loebs" takes us into the backwoods as well as on the high roads of classical literature. Livy has now reached his eleventh volume out of thirteen. The witty Lucian and the grave Plutarch continue to charm us. Some of the essays in this volume of the *Moralia*, by the way, are not authentic Plutarch, and the whole of the *Problems* almost certainly was written not by Aristotle himself, but by his disciples. It is a diverting work to read, composed as it is of speculations, some sensible and some absurd, on all manner of subjects, from music and medicine to drunkenness, from sexual intercourse to gruel and smells. The *Remains of Old Latin* is a book which the layman is hardly likely to get far with ; but scholars will be grateful to Professor Warmington for his careful work on the very fragmentary fragments of Livius Andronicus, Naevius, Pacuvius and Accius.

Enchanted Land : Half a Million Miles in the King's England. By ARTHUR MEE. *Hodder and Stoughton.* 7s. 6d.

Kent : The Gateway of England and its Great Possessions. By ARTHUR MEE. *Hodder and Stoughton.* 10s. 6d.

Warwickshire : Shakespeare's County. Edited by ARTHUR MEE. *Hodder and Stoughton.* 7s. 6d.

Lancashire : Cradle of Our Prosperity. Edited by ARTHUR MEE. *Hodder and Stoughton.* 7s. 6d.

These four books are the first instalments of the King's England, edited by Arthur Mee, which the publishers describe as a new Domesday Book and claim to be unlike anything of the kind hitherto published. They are certainly unlike the Conqueror's great survey and will be of little use to the Exchequer. On the other hand, there is necessarily a

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This most necessary and beneficent of Hospitals, in which the necessitous sufferers from the cruellest of diseases are treated and cared for free of all charge, is in need of funds, and its necessity, when known, should itself constitute an irresistible appeal. During last year the number of patients admitted to the general wards of the Hospital was 1,134 and the average number of beds occupied daily was 118; there were performed 1,110 operations, in the Out-Patient Department there were 1,412 new patients, and the total out-patient attendances amounted to 10,246. The figures speak for themselves, and, in conjunction with the distinguished personnel of the medical staff and consultants, demonstrate as far as figures may the value of the work being carried on. Attached to the Hospital is the Research Institute which is a School of the University of London. The Director of the Institute, Professor E. L. Kennaway, and Professor J. W. Cook, Research Chemist, have this year been awarded a prize for their outstanding achievement in cancer research by the Union Internationale Contre le Cancer. The Research Institute needs extension, the wards of the Hospital should be modernised, and more accommodation for nurses is required. These extensions will cost £150,000, and though donations and subscriptions increase they still fail to overtake expenditure, and it is to be hoped that the Hospital's present appeal will have a response commensurate with its need. Gifts should be sent to the Earl of Granard, at The Hospital, Fulham Road, London, S.W.3.

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Blew, and put out my little light.'

'All ye who Christians be
Will ye not list to me,
Who have so often prayed
I might not be afraid?
I am a little frightened—can't you see?
Oh, light my little candle here for me.'
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great deal in them which is common to all county histories from the great folios to the smallest guide-books. Nevertheless, they are individual and different, and the descriptions are all derived from personal visits to the places described. The method of the county volumes is alphabetical, and each city, town, or village dealt with is given its separate niche in the volume. So there is no itinerary; we leap about the counties as the alphabet decides. This will make the books easy of reference. But not as gazetteers. They are frankly popular, and the descriptions are often lyrical; every tale is adorned and every moral pointed. Mr. Mee is clearly an active editor, for one may detect in the Warwickshire and the Lancashire which he edits frequent traces of the hand which wrote *Enchanted Land*, the introductory volume, and the Kent. Mr. Mee's antiquarian and historical knowledge is extensive; though his temper is rarely historic. Henry VIII is "Bluebeard," Cardinal Pole is an infamous man, Anthony Widville, as author of our first printed book, will be remembered when Richard III is forgotten, and so on. We visit the Beauchamp tombs and are asked to weep for Joan of Arc. But for all these pious opinions and sentiments, Mr. Mee has a real eye for beauty of scene or architecture, he can tell a historical or biographical story neatly, he has secured many excellent illustrations, and we have little doubt that the series will achieve a considerable popular success.

Lord Mansfield. By C. H. S. FIFOOT. *Oxford University Press.* 15*s.*

This is a serious study of a great lawyer written by a lawyer for lawyers. But it happens that Mr. Fifoot is also a wit and an ironist; and he writes with such charm and lucidity that his severest technicalities—and the book is highly technical—are easier to understand than many another man's vernacular. We see in Mansfield as here presented a man born before his time, shedding the cold clear light of modern thought upon a law the theory of which was still entangled in feudalism and its practice hampered by redundances, futilities and obscurantism. The prologue in which Mr. Fifoot exhibits the law and its interpretation when Murray came to the Bar and the epilogue in which he explains its return to chaos on Mansfield's death are as witty and entertaining as they are informative and authoritative; and on closing the detailed study of Mansfield's activities during the intervening years one wonders whether to admire most his courtesy as and to counsel, his virtuosity as a lawyer, or his superb common sense as a judge when from the King's Bench he dispensed equity to all who came to him with clean hands.

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Indies Adventure: The Amazing Career of Alfonso de Albuquerque. By ELAINE SANCEAU. *Blackie.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

It is pleasant to find a "blurb" which is true, as in the present case, when her publishers assure us that in the hands of Miss Sanceau the story of Albuquerque reappears not as a faded page of early sixteenth century but as a brilliant and exciting narrative. There is, of course, a brilliant and exciting story to tell, for among the tales of Eastern conquest there is none more spirited, nor among the conquerors one more pleasant to meet. And it is a merit of this book that it does enable us to meet the man and to show us that, great as were the achievements of the founder of the Portuguese East Indies, the man himself was greater than his achievement. Miss Sanceau's method of narration is swift. Her sentences are short, and in description she makes free use of the vernacular, which, if at times a little surprising, gives an immediacy to story, and the impression that here is a twentieth-century person making contact with the sixteenth century. When Miss Sanceau records the speeches and orders and arguments of Albuquerque she keeps to her authorities, a bibliography of which is appended, with a chronological table and a useful map, but, strange to say, no index.

The Belly Book, or Diner's Guide. By C. LOUIS LEIPOLDT. *Williams and Norgate.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

The Belly Book belies its over-jovial title. Its modest cover hides no would-be gargantuan yearning for great barons of beef and groaning boards. Dr. Leipoldt lacks the lyrical feelings of someone who might cry "Lovely, lovely, scrumptious food" almost as much as he lacks the religious enthusiasm of one who would make a better man of you by having you live on nuts. In fact, this is a moderate little book, taking morsels of wisdom from so many sources that it has, in the end, no decisive flavour of its own. When it was first published (in 1911) the field of dietetics was less cultivated than it now is, and Dr. Leipoldt could say in his introduction, "No apology . . . is needed for the writing of a book on feeding," but since then the whole area of food has been so ploughed and cross-ploughed, so harrowed and teased, that hardly a clod remains undissolved into its alkalies and proteins. The introduction to the 1936 edition gives a fine bibliography of food for the last twenty-five years, and explains that this book, though it has been brought up to date, is still just "Common Sense Dietetics." It has been suggested that food, when much discussed, turns to fodder. For those who do not fear this result, and have not themselves been converted to hay, this can be recommended as a pleasant, non-cranky little dietary.

GRAMOPHONE NOTES

MOST people give others presents which they themselves happen to like; but if you want to be certain of pleasing the recipient as well, you will give him (or her) the new recording of Beethoven's *Seventh Symphony*, played by the New York Philharmonic Orchestra under Toscanini (H.M.V. DB2986–90). The latter's mastery lies in the marvellous precision of his tempi, phrasing, and dynamics. Listen, for instance, to the announcement of the 6–8 theme in the first movement: you will understand it as you never did before. It is this iron control which makes the climaxes so astounding, by the *gradualness* with which they are approached. The way in which the volume is increased in the beginning of the *Allegretto* could have been achieved by no other conductor; and one can hear every instrument always. The Trio of the *Scherzo* is taken faster than usual, but this is according to the indications in the score. Toscanini recordings are all too few and far between; let us be thankful for this one. And also for the two Bach *Suites*, in C and B minor, played by the Adolf Busch Chamber Players (H.M.V. DB3012–7). These records have the same qualities of precision and delicacy that distinguish those of the *Brandenburg Concerti*, made by the same players; and the passages for concerted wind are a joy to listen to. The music is Bach at his least serious. Another record which is certain to be popular as a Christmas present is that of the *Meistersinger Overture*, played by the London Philharmonic Orchestra under Sir Thomas Beecham (Col. LX557). This is as resplendent as everyone will expect it to be. In quite another category is Mozart's *Violin Concerto in G* (K216), played by Yehudi Menuhin with the Paris Symphony Orchestra under Georges Enesco (H.M.V. DB2729–31). This is not Mozart at his greatest (none of the violin concerti are, because they are all early works; in maturity the composer seems to have preferred to write for the piano); but it is gay and melodious music, which Menuhin plays with easy mastery and extreme beauty of tone. Furtwängler and the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra give a very fine, resonant account of the *Overture* and *Intermezzo*, Act 3, from Weber's *Der Freischütz* (Decca CA8262–3). The horns in the *adagio* are wonderfully round and realistic. This seems to me one of the best records

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LITERARY

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Decca has yet issued. The performance, as one might expect, leaves nothing to be desired. Continuing their recordings of music from the repertoire of the Russian Ballet, Antal Dorati and the London Philharmonic Orchestra now give us *Le Beau Danube*, which consists of excerpts from the music of Johann Strauss. This is one of the most exhilarating ballets of recent years, and the suite is in itself delightful. The recording is cheap at the price, but rather tinny. Saint-Saëns's *Suite Algérienne* comes essentially out of the same box, but it is more pretentious and vastly inferior. All the same, it is quite good picturesque stuff, of the twopence-coloured variety, and the performance, by the Grand Symphony Orchestra (Parl. R2274–7), is good. It may at least be useful as a *voyage immobile*—a substitute for that winter cruise which you can't afford this year.

The String Quintet is a very satisfactory ensemble indeed and has produced several masterpieces; the extra viola or 'cello adds much more richness to the quartet than would be imagined. Thus the Beethoven *Quintet in C* is among the most important of the composer's early works, though it is not as well known to the public as it deserves to be. The first movement has a curiously Schubertian flavour, and the *adagio* reminds one of some of the slow movements of the early piano sonatas. The final *presto* is a very remarkable, dramatically conceived affair. The performance by the Lener Quartet with William Primrose (Col. LX546–9) is uniformly admirable. The composer is almost as well represented by the *Cello Sonata in A, op.* 69. This is a particularly lovely and thoughtful work, full of those aspiring romantic themes which set the model for the whole of the nineteenth century in music. Paul Grümmer and Wilhelm Kempff are a pair of soloists who go well in harness, and their performance is perfectly adequate (Decca CA8259–61). The only piano record I have received this month is a very fine one. No doubt it is my inveterate dislike of the organ which makes me prefer Bach's *Prelude and Fugue in A minor* in the Liszt transcription for piano, to the original version; but it is certainly completely unvulgar, and so is Miss Eileen Joyce's rendering of it (Parl. E11301). All amateurs of this musicianly and technically very accomplished pianist will want to possess this record, which is a really outstanding one from every point of view. The violinist Natan Milstein gives an impeccable performance of Smetana's lively *From my Homeland No.* 2 and a rather unpleasant transcription of Liszt's lovely *Consolation No.* 3 (Col. LX558). This record would make a good present for a relation who pretends to be fond of music. Before I leave the subject of chamber music I should like to urge some one of the recording companies to issue a set of Fauré's *Piano Quartet in G minor*, a ravishingly beautiful work which should be very popular, but which has received far too little attention.

The love-duet at the end of Act I of Verdi's *Otello* has been criticised for aiming at the effects of Wagner and falling short of them. This seems to me quite unfair: no tenderer, more ecstatic love music exists than this duet, unless it be the *adagio* of Berlioz' *Romeo and Juliet Symphony*, a recording of which has long been overdue. The latest record of the duet, by Claudia Muzio and Francesco Merli with orchestra (Col. LX550), suffers from the weakness of the tenor. But the soprano is good enough and the record is worth buying. "I still seem to hear," from Bizet's *Pearl Fishers*, is a beautiful aria, and Luigi Fort gives it a *bel canto* rendering which is a joy to listen to (Parl. DX756). The obverse contains "All hail, thou dwelling," from Gounod's *Faust*. Oscar Strauss's *Land without Music* is excellent Viennese light music, and Richard Tauber fairly romps away with "Smile for Me," "Simple Little Melody," "Heaven in a Song," and "You Must Have Music" (Parl. RO20318–9), though I fear his English fans may find his accent a bit disturbing to the spell.

I haven't a great many dance records to recommend this month. The Dorsey Brothers' version of *Solitude* (Br.0135) has S.A. Of *I'll Sing you a Thousand Love-songs* the best version seemed to me that of Ambrose (Decca F6187), though Roy Fox's is also good (H.M.V. BD5138). Greta Keller's latest, *Me and the Moon* and *Drop in Next Time You're Passing*, are not very distinguished, but they serve to display their singer's well-known qualities. *Ups and Downs* is exhilarating and brilliantly played by Lew Stone (Decca F6138). *I'm in a Dancing Mood* and *Just say "Aloha,"* played by Jack Hylton (H.M.V. BD5136), are quite pleasing. Both Bing Crosby and Duke Ellington seem to me to be firmly stuck in a groove. The latter's *Harlemania* and *Jazz Lips* (H.M.V. B8505) are both dull and ugly—an odious combination of qualities; while in *I Never Realised* (Br.02281) Bing Crosby is far too like himself to give his fans any new thrill.

EDWARD SACKVILLE WEST

Week-end Competitions

No. 353

Set by G. W. Stonier

Imagine that you receive a letter from a publisher asking you to contribute a short piece, in prose or verse, to a modern bestiary. He adds "Choose any animal you like, living, extinct or mythical; but remember, if you write about creatures as familiar as the cat or the monkey, I shall expect you to show some originality in your writing. You may give a portrait, such as the eighteenth-century Character writers provided of human types; or a fable (using, of course, as many animals as you please). You may be moral like Aesop, human and poetical like La Fontaine, lyrical and comic like Jules Renard, exactly recondite like Miss Marianne Moore, topical and surrealist in the manner of Mr. Walt Disney. The surprise poem which ends 'For she was only a water rat' might be a good formula to start from, if you can use it in your own way. I do not mention these names to bewilder you, or necessarily to serve you as models. Any style, any method will do, so long as it helps you to give a living glimpse of some animal. The briefer the better. Do not hesitate to send as many pieces as you like, for me to choose from." Usual prizes.

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Thursday, December 24th.
2. Competitors may use a pseudonym. Typescript is not insisted on, but writing must be on one side of the paper only.
3. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.
4. No competitor is eligible for more than one prize in any one week.

The result of last week's competition will be announced in our next issue.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 351

Set by Roger Marvell

The usual prizes are offered for a poem of fourteen lines (or less) suggested by the burning of the Crystal Palace. Comic poems are not absolutely excluded, but competitors are warned that the setter regards the fire with unmixed feelings of distress.

Report by Roger Marvell

Veterans to whom the Palace symbolised their youth, or who awoke to beauty at the music of Handel first heard in that prodigious greenhouse, invalids who have never seen the Palace, *laudatores temporis acti*, devotees of the Prince Consort, they all sent poems. One gentleman was inspired to the first poem of his life (poetry, alas, like the piano, requires practice, and I hope he will persevere), and another saw in the blaze an omen of a King's unworthiness. Paxton was mentioned by only one competitor, and the architectural "modernity" of this steel and glass building excited an analogous poetic modernity only in D. W. B. Choice of the prize-winners was not easy. W. Leslie Nicholls, Alice Herbert, Allan M. Laing, Tor and Pibwob, were all good.

I liked Richard Pomfret's epitaph:

> Crystal clear, you firmly stood
> Consort to a world of good;
> Widowed, you could but retire
> With a mad world for your pyre.

I recommend that the prizes be divided between William Bliss's polished verses, and the rougher but imaginative poem by M. R. D.

LAMENT FOR THE CRYSTAL PALACE

> How often have I turned to see
> From some far Kent or Surrey hill,
> Where that rose-mirror seemed to me
> To hold the dying sunset still.
>
> Or, nearer home, how often seen
> In the clear morning light updrawn,
> That lifted wonder, rose and green
> Against the opal of the dawn.
>
> . . . . .
>
> No more! Another landmark gone,
> Another friend no more to know.
> From Leith Hill, where the sun once shone
> That mirrored light no more shall show.

WILLIAM BLISS

> The flames with arms of molten brass
> Have caught the palace made of glass,
> Oh, smother them, or they will kill

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(*b*) *Ethics and Politics.*
(*c*) *Italian:* The lecturer will be required to teach both elementary and advanced students. Applicants should state what other Romance language or languages, if any, they are competent to teach.
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The commencing salary will be not less than £400 and not more than £475 per annum according to qualifications, viz. previous teaching or other experience and original work published. The salary of a lecturer rises by annual increments of £25 to £500, and, subject to the conditions of appointment, may rise by like increments to £600, or in certain cases to £750.

The University session commences on March 2nd; applicants should state the earliest date on which they would be able to assume duty.

Applications (in triplicate) must reach the Secretary, Office of the High Commissioner for the Union of South Africa, South Africa House, Trafalgar Square, London, W.C.2. (from whom a memorandum giving the conditions of appointment may be obtained) not later than January 15th, 1937.

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The successful candidate will be required to undergo a medical examination.

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The coloured birds from far country
Scream at the fires that set them free,
And flee in fear from that furnace,
Like buntings from a flaming dress.

Scream birds! You cannot mourn too loud
These broken towers, this ashen shroud—
The dream which made Victoria proud.

M. R. D.

CALIBAN'S PROBLEM CONTEST

PROBLEM 207.—LOOKING-GLASS ZOO

By Sir Arthur Eddington

I took some nephews and nieces to the Zoo, and we halted at a cage marked

Tovus Slithius, male and female.
Borogovus Mimsius, male and female.
Rathus Momus, male and female.
Jabberwockius Vulgaris, male and female.

The eight animals were asleep in a row, and the children began to guess which was which. "That one at the end is Mr. Tove." "No, no! It's Mrs. Jabberwock," and so on. I suggested that they should each write down the names in order from left to right, and offered a prize to the one who got most names right.

As the four species were easily distinguishable, no mistake would arise in pairing the animals; naturally a child who identified one animal as Mr. Tove identified the other animal of the same species as Mrs. Tove.

The keeper, who consented to judge the lists, scrutinised them carefully. "Here's a queer thing. I take two of the lists, say, John's and Mary's. The animal which John supposes to be the animal which Mary supposes to be Mr. Tove is the animal which Mary supposes to be the animal which John supposes to be Mrs. Tove. It is just the same for every pair of lists, and for all four species.

"Curiouser and curiouser! Each boy supposes Mr. Tove to be the animal which he supposes to be Mr. Tove; but each girl supposes Mr. Tove to be the animal which she supposes to be Mrs. Tove. And similarly for the other animals. I mean, for instance, that the animal Mary calls Mr. Tove is really Mrs. Rathe, but the animal she calls Mrs. Rathe is really Mrs. Tove."

"It seems a little involved," I said, "but I suppose it is a remarkable coincidence."

"Very remarkable," replied Mr. Dodgson (whom I had supposed to be the keeper) "and it could not have happened if you had brought any more children."

How many nephews and nieces were there? Was the winner a boy or a girl? And how many names did the winner get right?

Note by Caliban.—I ought to mention that the author's solution of the above fascinating problem involves the application of a mathematical technique which is quite beyond my own capacities. I shall be interested to see if others, similarly placed, can contrive to find the answer empirically.

PROBLEM 205.—MINA WAS A MEANIE

Alfred met Elfie at the Tivoli.
Bert met Eileen at the Marble Arch.
Dick met Monica at the Plaza.

A very simple problem, especially if solved diagrammatically.

PROBLEM 204.—GUFFINS

A set of Low's Cartoons goes to: Miss Loveday M. Watts, King Edward VI School, Stratford-on-Avon. *Six points are awarded.*

PRIZES FOR PROBLEM SOLVERS

A set of Low's cartoons is awarded to the sender of a correct solution selected at random.

In addition, a record is kept of correct solutions sent, and of the points scored weekly by solvers. On attaining 100 points a solver is entitled to a prize consisting of any book (or books) reviewed or advertised in these columns, of a value not greater than 10*s*. Solvers who have won a prize on this basis are eligible for a second prize on attaining a further 120 points, and for a third prize on attaining a further 150. Solutions must be addressed to CALIBAN, c/o the Editor, and must reach this office not later than Tuesday week following publication of the problem. Solutions to two problems may be sent in one envelope, but on separate sheets of paper.

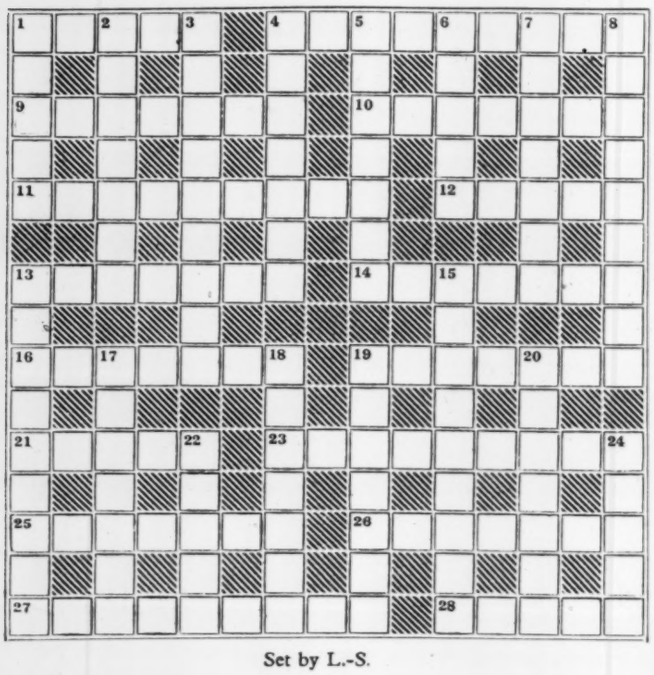
Some indication should be given of the method of solution.

[U.S.A. Competitors. The Editor regrets that the prizes offered in our Week-end Competitions cannot apply to American competitors.]

CALIBAN

WEEK-END CROSSWORD 354

The sender of the first correct solution to be opened may choose as prize a copy of either *This England* or *The Playtime Omnibus*. Envelopes should be addressed to "CROSSWORDS," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1, and must arrive not later than first post next Tuesday. Prize-winners should address their claims to the Editor.



Set by L.-S.

The last week's winner is

Dr. J. B. S. Lewis, Hanwell Mental Hospital, Southall

ACROSS

1. Physiological Trojan?
4. Mark of burning perhaps.
9. Cables often come about it.
10. Swallows not down but up.
11. People often stick it on a country walk.
12. The whole building is this porter's lodge.
13. A puller reformed.
14. Those who 3 hope to escape thus.
16. Describes the empty spaces, though not usually wide ones.
19. Ecclesiastic who was involved in 1066 and all that.
21. I'd follow a 24 man.
23. No doubt the Nigger Minstrels play for this dance.
25. Give a clerical dressing down.
26. Reverse of what casual callers do.
27. Describes the fraternity of the Guards.
28. Why, as is commonly said, in distress?

DOWN

1. How the gears go disguised.
2. I wander about with a Parliamentary representative.
3. Bradman's favourite stroke when he wants to 14?
4. This pigeon can, of course, keep itself cool.
5. Villain of a scorching episode.
6. So the wager includes it.
7. Produced by successful ventilation.
8. What the T.B.D. did in action no doubt.
13. You might jump to the conclusion that this is the family tomb of the Poles.
15. Not a clear course.
17. Martha was about many things.
18. "My Genius is —; as, it is said, Mark Antony's was by Caesar."
19. An ill speech illegally made.
20. One of the structural sciences.
22. A couple of ducks mixed up with the mud.
24. The thief and the dog each has his separate brand of it.

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD

F	R	A	N	C	■	P	I	G	E	O	N	P	I	E
R	■	B	■	A	■	A	■	O	■	R	■	E	■	R
I	D	I	O	T	I	C	■	A	M	M	O	N	I	A
E	■	G	■	C	■	E	■	L	■	E	■	G	■	S
D	E	A	T	H	T	R	A	P	■	R	O	U	T	E
F	■	I	■	P	■	■	■	O	■	■	■	I	■	■
I	G	L	O	O	■	H	U	S	H	M	O	N	E	Y
S	■	■	■	L	■	O	■	T	■	I	■	■	■	O
H	A	Z	E	L	N	U	T	S	■	S	A	J	O	U
■	■	E	■	■	■	S	■	■	■	C	■	O	■	N
B	R	A	N	D	■	E	N	G	R	A	V	I	N	G
O	■	L	■	O	■	D	■	I	■	L	■	N	■	I
W	H	O	S	W	H	O	■	B	E	L	A	T	E	D
E	■	U	■	S	■	G	■	E	■	E	■	E	■	E
D	I	S	P	E	N	S	E	D	■	D	U	R	G	A

London Amusements

MATINEES

All at 2.30 p.m. unless otherwise stated.

COMEDY. Busman's Honeymoon. T.,F.,S.

DRURY LANE. Careless Rapture. Wed., Sat.

DUCHESS. Murder in the Cathedral. W.,Th.,S.

DUKE OF YORK'S. Wed. & Sat.
The Astonished Ostrich.

GLOBE. "Call It a Day." Wed. & Sats.

KINGSWAY. Buckie's Bears. Box. D., 2.30, 5.30

LYRIC. Charles the King. Thurs., Sats.

PALACE. This'll Make You Whistle. W., S.

PHŒNIX. "Hell-for-Leather!" Thur., Sat.

QUEEN'S. Jane Eyre. Wed., Sat. & Dec. 21.

ROYALTY. Marigold. Wed., Thurs., Sat.

ST. MARTIN'S. Tues., Fri. & Boxing Day.
Till the Cows Come Home.

SAVILLE. Over She Goes. Sats.

SAVOY. "Young Madame Conti." Tu., Th.

WESTMINSTER. Waste. Wed. & Sat.

WHITEHALL. Anthony & Anna. W. & S.

WYNDHAM'S. "Mademoiselle." Wed., Sat.

THEATRES

COLISEUM. Tem. 3161. XMAS EVE, 7.30.
Daily, 2 & 7.30. PRINCE LITTLER'S Pantomime
CINDERELLA
EDNA BEST. LUPINO LANE.
MADGE ELLIOTT. DOUGLAS WAKEFIELD.

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No Performance Christmas Eve.
ANMER HALL presents
"BUSMAN'S HONEYMOON."
By DOROTHY L. SAYERS & M. ST. CLARE BYRNE.

DRURY LANE. 8.0 Wed., Sat. & Dec. 28, 2.30.
IVOR NOVELLO, DOROTHY DICKSON,
ZENA DARE in
CARELESS RAPTURE.

DUCHESS. Tem. 8243. 4/10 to 12/6 (unres. 3/-).
Nightly (exc. Mons.), 8.30. Mats., Wed., Th., Sat., 2.30.
MURDER IN THE CATHEDRAL.
by T. S. ELIOT. Robert Speaight as "BECKET."
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By JAMES BRIDIE & BRUNO FRANK.

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Mats., WEDS. and SATS., 2.30.
FAY COMPTON & OWEN NARES in
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(Closed Dec. 21 to 25. Extra Mat., Dec. 28.)

PALACE. 8.15. Wed., Sat. & Dec. 28, 2.30.
JACK BUCHANAN in
THIS'LL MAKE YOU WHISTLE,
with ELSIE RANDOLPH.

PHŒNIX. Tem. 8611. Evgs., 8.30. Mats., Th. & S., 2.30
"HELL-FOR-LEATHER!"
with Bernard Nedell.
By Barré Lyndon.

PLAYHOUSE. OVER 250 PERFS. Whi. 7774.
Evgs., 8.30 (Ex. Mons. & Dec. 24).
Mats., Wed., Thurs., Sat. & Dec. 29. 2.30.
NANCY PRICE in
WHITEOAKS.

QUEEN'S. Ger. 4517. Evgs. (exc. Dec. 24 & 25) at 8.30
WED., SAT. & MON. next, 2.30.
JANE EYRE.
CURIGWEN LEWIS. REGINALD TATE.

ROYALTY. (Ger. 7331.) Evgs. (exc. Mon.), 8.30.
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TILL THE COWS COME HOME.

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STANLEY LUPINO in
OVER SHE GOES.
Musical Tantivy with LADDIE CLIFF.

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CONSTANCE CUMMINGS. WILLIAM FOX.

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Robertson Hare, Alfred Drayton, John Mills in
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A Comedy by ST. JOHN ERVINE.

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"MADEMOISELLE."

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Heroes Don't Care. By Margot Neville.

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Evgs., 7.45. Mat., Sat., 2.30.
Spring Tide. By George Bellam & J. B. Priestley.

MANCHESTER **Repertory.**
Evgs., 7.30.
Ah, Wilderness. By Eugene O'Neill.

The Repertory Theatres whose announcements appear above are members of The Association of Repertory Theatres. *For information concerning Theatres belonging to this Association, or qualified to belong to it, apply to the Honorary Secretary, J. Baxter Somerville, Messrs. Baxter & Co., 12 Victoria St., London, S.W.1.*

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THE WEEK IN THE CITY

By TOREADOR

THE GOLD GLUT—U.S. GOLD STERILISATION AND TAXATION—RAILWAY CLEARING HOUSE BONDS—FILMS AND GAUMONT-BRITISH—WEST WITWATERSRAND

THE purchase of £65 millions of gold by the Bank of England this week and the reduction of the fiduciary issue by £60 millions are twin transactions intimately connected with the acquisition of £40 millions of French gold, being the repayment of the French credit. The Exchange Equalisation Fund has been flooded out with gold and is short of sterling, so that the natural course was for the Fund to hand over some of its gold to the Bank of England. There is nothing deflationary in this transaction. The fact that the gold has been bought at around 140*s.* per oz. by the Exchange Fund and is then written down to 84*s.* 10½*d.* per oz. by the Bank of England is of no great importance at the moment, seeing that both the Fund and the Bank of England have too much gold. Actually, the Bank gains a net addition to its note reserve of £5 millions which in time may enable the joint stock banks to increase their deposits by £50 millions. The interesting feature of the transaction is the greater elasticity which the Bank secures in operating the fiduciary issue. In January, 1931, the fiduciary issue was raised by £50 millions to £275 millions and in 1933, when the gold reserve had been replenished, the amount was reduced once more to £260 millions. Mr. Chamberlain has declared that the reduction in the fiduciary issue is a temporary arrangement. It had no greater permanency, he said, than might seem desirable. In other words, if the gold should be required again by the Exchange Equalisation Fund it would be withdrawn from the Bank and the fiduciary issue would be raised accordingly. But if the Government varies the fiduciary issue more frequently in future, banking opinion may not be so shocked to see the upper limit of £260 millions removed if occasion demands. That is all to the good. In the meantime we have an active note issue of £459 millions which is more than 100 per cent. covered by gold—if the Bank wrote up its present gold stock of £313,660,000 to its current market value.

* * *

Rumours of other important gold events are current in the City. The French Government is said to be removing its tax on devaluation profits in order to tempt refugee money to return home. It is significant that it has already offered subscribers to its new 3-year 3½ per cent. bonds repayment at 140 per cent. if the subscription is made in gold. In the United States it is rumoured that the Treasury is considering measures for the sterilisation of the gold imports. It is known that President Roosevelt has been greatly concerned about the huge influx of foreign funds for investment, expressed by the inflow of gold. In addition to gold sterilisation it is said that the American Treasury is contemplating an increase in the taxation imposed on foreign holdings, which was fixed not long ago at 10 per cent. on interest and dividends or 15 per cent. on interest if the foreign recipient is a corporation. This would drive the best type of foreign investor out of the American markets, for his holdings are invariably first-class stocks bought primarily for income. Let us hope that President Roosevelt confines his attention to the sterilisation of foreign gold.

* * *

It must be a long time since I put forward a gilt-edged security for capital appreciation, but I can with some confidence recommend the Railway Freight Rebates Fund 2½ per cent. stock 1937/52 issue at 94½. £9,300,000 of this stock is being issued to enable the Fund to repay to the "main line" railways the amount of rates which, under the recent rating decisions, they have overpaid. £4,000,000 of the stock is being taken firm by the railways themselves. The security is gilt-edged, for the service requires £709,000 per annum and is charged on the railways' rating payments of £2,330,000 per annum. The terms are attractive. The stock is to be redeemed over sixteen years by a cumulative sinking fund of 5.12 per cent. operating by purchase below or drawings at par. My Statistical Assistant says he could work out the yield if the sinking fund were applied only in drawings, or, alternatively, if the actual market price at which stock could be bought for the sinking fund were to be always what it should be on a given yield basis, but he points out that the calculation of a yield on the latter assumption is of no value in cases where the sinking fund is heavy. He contends that the price should settle down around 100 in the not too distant future. Transvaal 3 per cent. stock used to be quoted at around par, when money rates were very much higher than they are now, simply because of the sinking fund. The B annuities of Indian Railways are also quoted at high prices, because the trustees of the sinking funds like to buy their own annuities. The new Railway Freight Rebates Fund stock should therefore be safe from the risks of depreciation because of its short-datedness and its heavy sinking fund. If it is assumed that the sinking fund monies will have to be applied in drawings at 100, the equivalent gross redemption yield works out at £3 9*s.* per cent. I agree with my Statistical Assistant that a purchase of the stock will pay the gilt-edged investor and provide a good funk-hole for the fearful investor who expects a rise in the rate of interest or a war in Europe.

* * *

It is a hard thing to say that British films are not even commercial, but the remark appears justified by the loss of £331,000 reported by London Film Productions, our premier producers. This is the company of which Mr. Alexander Korda is managing-director and the Prudential Assurance the financial god-parent. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, who are the outstanding film producers in the United States to-day, are intending to make a few pictures in England just to show us how economically and beautifully it can be done. The best answer to the American film invasion is for the Government to subsidise a British film centre, controlled by a public board after the style of the B.B.C., where British talent in directing and acting can be exercised regardless of the "box-office" and away from alien mentality. But that is another story. It is the prospect of a loss on film productions which makes the consolidated balance sheet now published, of Gaumont-British such gloomy reading. If a heavy loss were realised the company would be in an exceedingly tight position. Lest I should be accused of bias I will quote some of the comments which have appeared in the financial press. *The Economist* writes :

"The current assets position plainly indicates an unliquid state of affairs, which is analysed below :

Current Liabilities.		*Current Assets.*	
Bank overdraft	£1,577,431	Cash	£431,424
Creditors and dividends ..	1,048,758	Debtors	374,514
		Investments	11,029
		Films, completed, in production and expenditure on future productions ..	1,378,908
		Excess of current liabilities	430,314
	£2,626,189		£2,626,189

"A deficiency of £430,314 in current assets to meet outstanding liabilities is conclusive evidence of the group's stringent position. And this figure itself is struck after giving full weight to the item for films, although the ultimate value of unreleased productions and, especially, of 'expenditure carried forward in respect of future productions' is contingent to a degree."

According to the *Investors' Chronicle* there are net tangible assets of about £2,000,000 to support the equity capital of £3,000,000, but no attempt has been made in the consolidated statement to relate the book figure of £1,378,908 for films to probable market values. Yet the 10*s.* ordinary shares are still quoted in the market at 9*s.* 3*d.* Their real earning power cannot be guessed in the absence of a consolidated profit and loss account.

* * *

The sensation of the week has been the meteoric rise in West Witwatersrand Areas 10*s.* shares. A week ago the shares were only £14. On Friday last they rose to £16. On Monday the 14th, they opened at £17 and went to £17½. On Tuesday, amid great excitement, they rose to £19 and reacted sharply in the Street to £17⅞. On Wednesday they recovered to £18½. The company owns the mineral rights over 25,000 claims along the strike of the reef in the undeveloped Western areas of the Rand. Payable values have been disclosed in boreholes over the greater part of the area of 60,000 acres, and in the opinion of the engineers the existence of the main reef series is proved. The excitement this week was caused by the report that the shaft sunk by Venterspost, the Company's first subsidiary, had disclosed the reef in payable shape. Even if the property is proved, it will probably be similar to the neighbouring West Rand mines, that is, it will be low grade. The profits to be earned by the West Witwatersrand Areas will therefore be sensitive to a rise in costs which it is impossible at this stage to estimate. Taking the prevailing market valuation of £2,000 per claim of low-grade gold-mining areas, the total valuation of the property might be £50 millions, which is equivalent to £38½ per West Witwatersrand share. But what a gamble!

THE charge for classified advertisements is One Shilling and Sixpence per line per insertion (a line averages seven words). One line should be added for Box Number. Substantial reduction for a series of insertions. Copy first post Wednesday. The Advert. Manager, N.S. & N., 10 Great Turnstile, London, W.C.1. (Hol. 3216.)

LECTURES AND MEETINGS

CONWAY HALL, Red Lion Square, Holborn.—Sunday, December 20th, at 11 a.m.: HERBERT READ, M.A., D.Litt.: "ART AND RELIGION." 6.30 p.m. Concert Chamber Music. Admission Free. Visitors welcome.

THE ETHICAL CHURCH, Queen's Road, Bayswater, W.2. Sunday, December 20th, at 11, MISS CICELY HAMILTON: "THE DANGERS OF ORGANISATION." 6.30, MISS AMICIA CARROLL: "A NEW FACTORY BILL."

GUILDHOUSE, Eccleston Square, S.W.1. Sunday, December 20th. At 3.30, Christmas Play "THE WAY BACK" by the GUILDHOUSE PLAYERS. At 6.30, Toy Service with sermon by MRS. CAMPBELL GORDON.

COMMUNISM! SIX LECTURES ON THEORY AND PRACTICE.
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ARTISTS INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION, Friday Dec. 18th, 8.15, CRIME AND ART, H. T. F. RHODES, at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square. Admission: 1s.

SPANISH YOUTH FOODSHIP COMMITTEE. Farewell meeting to the ship, Shoreditch Town Hall, E.C.1, Monday, December 21st, 8 p.m. Speakers include D. N. Pritt, K.C., M.P., W. Roberts, M.P. and other members of M.P. Delegation of Madrid, J. Langdon-Davies, Dr. S. W. Jeger, L.C.C. Speakers from Spanish Medical Aid Committee and Youth Organisations. Contributions for foodship to the Secretary: Helen Jeger, 37 Great James Street, W.C.1. Depot for food, 51a Baker Street, King's Cross Road, W.C.1.

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"PRESENT CURRENTS IN BRITISH POLITICS." Lecturer: G. D. H. COLE.
2.30 *p.m.* "SPAIN," W. HORSFALL CARTER.
Wednesday, Jan. 6th, 10.30 a.m.
"THE POPULAR FRONT." Lecturer: EMILE-BURNS.
2.30 *p.m.*, "A CONSTRUCTIVE POLICY FOR THE PEACE MOVEMENT." Lecturer: J. D. BERNAL.
Thursday, Jan. 7th, 10.30 a.m.
"THE SOVIET CONSTITUTION." Lecturer: PAT SLOAN.
2.30 *p.m.*, "ECONOMICS OF PROSPERITY." Lecturer: WM. JOSS (Principal, Marx House School).
Friday, Jan. 8th, 10.30 a.m.
"Literature and Art in 1936"—a Symposium.
A Review of Culture in 1936. Douglas Garman.
A Review of Literature in 1936. Alick West.
A Review of Drama in 1936. Montague Slater.
2.30 *p.m.* THE POSITION AND FUTURE OF THE MIDDLE CLASS. Lecturer: MAURICE DOBB.
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